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East Edition No 615



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Why festivals hit the right note amid the county's cultural mix

YOU truly know summer has arrived when Britain's great tennis hope has crashed out of Wimbledon, England's national football team has bowed out early of a major tournament, and just as the first major music festivals open their gates, all the good weather scarpers and is replaced by downpours.

Certainly the organisers of the Hop Farm Festival in Paddock Wood this weekend will be hoping for good fortune as it attempts to refloat the event with a new promoter and a new look.

We should keep our collective fingers crossed too that it proves a commercial success. For years Kent was something of a live music wasteland, but over the last decade has established itself a reputation with strong events like the Hop Farm and Canterbury's Lounge on the Farm.

It would be a terrible shame if another promoter struggled to make it work financially and had to pull out. If not just for those who enjoy a weekend of fresh air and live music, but for the county's overall cultural mix. It's an essential ingredient to what makes the county provide such a diverse offering. You can win tickets to Lounge on the Farm inside this week's paper.

Certainly Kent has a diverse role to play in the great energy debate. We take a look at some of the issues over renewables and take a boat trip to get up close and personal with the London Array wind farm.

We also shed a little light on Land Securities, a company which has become one of the most powerful and influential in the county – but who you may never have heard of. It makes for an essential and fascinating read.

So let's hope the weather holds – enjoy this edition and have a great weekend.



Editor **Chris Britcher**


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MARINE PARADE - FOLKESTONE 1918


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Will wave of new homes swamp town's services?

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



THREAT: Concerns raised over flood risks and the need to boost infrastructure if homes get the go-ahead

CONCERNS continue to be expressed after plans for 650 new homes in west Kent were unveiled, prompting fears of flooding if last winter's storms are repeated, as well as a tidal wave strangling existing local services.

Revealed last weekend, the plans are being driven forward by developers Hillreed Homes and Rydon Homes.

They would include the homes and primary school at the preferred locations of Mascalls Court Farm and Church Farm in Paddock Wood.

The builders say the response has been broadly positive and are now sifting through the feedback before submitting a full planning application to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

However, there are concerns about the risk of flooding as well as fears that such an influx could swamp the town's services.

Paul Mepham, design and planning director of Rydon Homes, said: "There were some concerns raised, including flood risk and the impact on the town's infrastructure, which we are working on to deliver the best outcomes. In terms of flooding, I would like to reassure local residents that the measures in our proposals provide a real opportunity to reduce flood risk and provide a better level of protection for parts of the town."

David McFarlane of consultancy SP Broadway, which is handling the applications for both building companies, said: "Existing flood risk within the town will be reduced through a comprehensive drainage strategy, which would significantly reduce surface water run-off flows and accommodate periodic floodwater within large storage basins, thereby reducing flood risk downstream and within the surrounding areas.

"Design options for the local highway network are currently being explored in liaison with the highway authority and will include a number of improvements to local junctions alongside other potential off-site highway improvements."

The Environment Agency has examined the situation and appears comfortable with the plans.

It said: "We have no objection to the principle of any residential development at this location, nor do we object to the principle of construction basins to provide for flood storage and excess water run-off."

If all goes to plan, the application will be submitted to the local council later this summer.

Fear for the 'invisible' foster children who can become vulnerable

KENT County Council (KCC) is concerned that lack of awareness about private fostering is leading to 'invisible children' who are not getting the support they need.

Private fostering is when someone is caring for a child under 16 – or an under-18 with disabilities – who is not a relative.

By law, the county council must be informed in order to monitor the care of the children involved and provide necessary support for their carers.

It is feared that, if the authorities are not notified, the child can become 'hidden' and vulnerable.

Studies suggest that more than half of private fostering arrangements are not known to the local authorities.

Peter Oakford, KCC cabinet member for specialist children's services, said: "The majority of private foster carers step in at a very difficult time and do a really good job.

"We need to know about them so we can make sure they are aware of all the support they can get to help them do the best for the child.

"If we don't know about these arrangements, the child is put in a very vulnerable position and, in a very few cases, they may be in danger.

"We would urge anyone who is privately fostering to let us know or if you suspect a child is being privately fostered and the local authority is not aware, please get in touch."

The true number of children being privately fostered is unknown, but the British Association for Adoption and Fostering estimates it is between 15,000 and 20,000 in the UK.

KCC fears that private fostering is being under-reported, with it being notified of 56 new cases between March 2013 and 2014, a reduction of 27 per cent over the past three years.

As part of an effort to raise awareness, the county council will be highlighting Private Fostering Week, which runs from July 7-14.

To notify KCC of any such arrangements, you should do so six weeks before it happens or 48 hours if an emergency arrangement. Call 03000 41 11 11.

Big crowds flock to return of new-look Hop Farm Festival

THOUSANDS of music fans will be praying the weather remains dry as the Hop Farm Festival returns for its sixth outing this weekend.

Now with a new look and a new promoter, the event started on Friday and runs through until Sunday night.

It is held in the grounds of the popular west Kent tourist attraction in Paddock Wood.

Among the names performing have been the likes of Ray Davies from The Kinks and Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys.

Other performers included James Blunt, Paul Heaton and Scouting for Girls.

The Sunday line-up is headlined by actress, model and singer Grace Jones, with Marc Almond, Billy Ocean, Peter Hook and Deacon Blue also performing. Some 20,000 are expected.

Arts groups across county get £4m funding injection

THE county is set to receive almost £4 million in Arts Council England funding over the next three years.

It comes as the organisation, the national development agency for the arts which distributes money from central government and the National Lottery, unveils its spending between 2015-2018.

In total, it is distributing £52.9m across the south east.

The money will go to five organisations, which include the Canterbury Festival, the Turner Contemporary, and Canterbury-based 'creative laboratory' People United.

Additional funding of £3m will also go to Ashford's Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company, while the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury will receive regular funding.

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Riverside fury as punt company is suspended

CONTROVERSY has arrived on the banks of the River Stour in Canterbury after a company which operates a punt along the river for tourists had its licence suspended.

The Canterbury Punting Company has had its licence suspended indefinitely – putting 14 people out of work. It claims it was after a member of staff was spotted stepping into one foot of water to push the boat off instead of using a pole, something which breaches health and safety regulations.

More than 200 people have signed a petition calling on the council to reverse the decision.

Owner Ashley Dalton said: "We've operated for five years. This ruins our dream."

A council spokesman said: "The council was acting on the advice of qualified advisers."

An investigation is now on-going.

Duo who looted sunken shipwrecks are handed a £60,000 fine by judge

By Sarah Linney
sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

TWO divers have been fined more than £60,000 between them for taking valuable items from shipwrecks off the Kent coast.

David Knight and Edward Huzzey, both from Sandgate in Folkestone, used explosives and sophisticated cutting equipment to free goods thought to be worth more than £250,000.

The pair began their secret operation as far back as 2001, taking cannons, propellors, lead and tin ingots from German First World War submarines and a 200-year-old wreck carrying cargo from the East India Company. Six of the cannons, which are thought to have been sold on, have been returned to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

After admitting 19 offences between them under the Merchant Shipping Act, they were fined £7,000 and £6,500 respectively and ordered to pay £25,000 in costs each.



FOUND: A jug pinched from wreck

District Judge Anthony Calloway, passing sentence at Southampton Magistrates' Court, said: "The scale of the operation has to be considered to have been on an industrial scale.

"The resources employed were valuable and substantial, using good-quality lifting equipment and explosives.

"Huzzey and Knight are friends and clearly operated in close co-operation to scavenge for material from the wrecks they explored."

Anyone who recovers material from a wreck within UK waters, or brings wreck material into UK waters, must report it to a Maritime and Coastguard Agency official known as the Receiver of Wreck within 28 days.

Many wreck sites are protected because of their historic importance or because they are dangerous.

The Receiver of Wreck, Alison Kentuck, said: "It is not a case of finders keepers.

"By reporting wreck material you are giving the rightful owner the opportunity to have their property returned and you may be adding important information to the historic record. Legitimate finders are likely to be entitled to a salvage award, but those who don't declare items are breaking the law and could find themselves facing hefty fines."



DELIGHT: PCC Ann Barnes

Cash boost for county's sex assault centre

A CENTRE dedicated to aiding sexual-assault victims has been given a £150,000 funding boost.

The money will enable victims to refer themselves to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Maidstone instead of having to be referred by a police officer.

This will mean they no longer need to report the crime before they can get help.

It will be used to fund more counsellors at the centre to cope with the expected increase in referrals, as well as a new phone line and a website.

It will also pay for a member of staff who will have the job of raising awareness of the centre.

Police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes, whose manifesto included a promise to give victims of crime greater priority, bid for the cash from the government's £12 million fund for crime commissioners across the country.

A third of the money will be used to support the work of the Kent and Medway Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, who support victims of domestic abuse.

Mrs Barnes said: "This funding allows us to make the next step, which is a vital one for those who have been through a horrendous ordeal but feel unable to report it to police."

Brothel duo handed suspended sentences

TWO women have been given suspended prison sentences for 10 months for running a brothel after police raided a massage parlour.

Officers arrested the duo after a raid in Risborough Lane, Cheriton, Folkestone, on December 11.

The pair pleaded guilty on May 19 at Canterbury Crown Court and were sentenced last week.

Sharon Potts, aged 60, of Coolinge Lane, received six months' imprisonment, suspended for two years, for managing a brothel.

She was also given a 9pm to 7am curfew with a tag for three months and fined £400.

Lisa Joy, aged 50, of Somerset Road, received four months' imprisonment, suspended for two years, for assisting in the management of a brothel.

She was also given a 9pm to 7am curfew with a tag for three months and fined £400.

Police had originally raided the property as part of a probe into people-trafficking. No arrests were made in connection with that investigation.

Agency ponders legal scrap over sewage

SOUTHERN Water could face prosecution over a raw sewage spill on Thanet's beaches.

The Environment Agency says it has completed a "complex and detailed investigation" into the incident in June 2012, in which all the district's beaches had to be closed to swimmers, and has now passed the matter to its lawyers.

A blockage at the Southern Water Foreness Point sewage pumping station after heavy rain saw waste spill into the sea. An agency spokesman said: "We are considering the evidence and will apply the appropriate tests in deciding whether or not to prosecute."

Southern Water was fined £200,000 last year over untreated sewage that was discharged into the sea off Margate in 2011.

Southern Water spokesman Sam Underwood said: "We have co-operated fully with the Environment Agency concerning their investigations into the incident and have yet to hear from them concerning how they intend to proceed."

BBC's Esler secures top university position

BBC journalist and novelist Gavin Esler will be installed as chancellor of the University of Kent at a ceremony taking place at Rochester Cathedral on Tuesday.

He will be formally presented with the title during the university's congregation ceremony.

Born in Glasgow and raised in Edinburgh and Northern Ireland, he graduated from the University of Kent with a BA in English and American literature in 1974.

He then went on to enjoy a hugely successful career as a reporter, working for the BBC since 1977, during which time he has become one of the corporation's best known figures.

During his career he was the BBC's White House-based chief North American correspondent between 1988 and 1998 and most recently has been one of the three main presenters on BBC2's Newsnight.

The university awarded him an honorary MA in 1995 and an honorary doctorate of civil law in 2005.

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A whole new story as Kent on Sunday enjoys its fresh surroundings

KENT on Sunday moved into its new offices on Monday – so be sure to use our new address when you want to get in contact with us.

After 10 years in Smeeth, we began a new era for your favourite Kent weekend newspaper when we moved into Kent House in the heart of Ashford town centre.

Kent on Sunday's editorial, advertising and distribution teams are now based at the modern new offices, along with colleagues from our sister title, the glossy Kent Life magazine.

From here we will continue to deliver the finest regional newspaper for the entire county, with all the latest news, leisure, sport, business and your one-stop shop for the best offers from our loyal advertisers.

Archant Kent publisher Simon Irwin said: "We enjoyed a great period of success at Apple Barn, winning a host of awards over the years and firmly establishing ourselves as a class apart for a free newspaper.

"And we continue to evolve which is why we're now greatly looking forward to starting the next chapter of our success story."

Which means if you want to get in touch, you'll need to now address all correspondence to:

Kent on Sunday, Archant Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. All email addresses remain the same.

Our telephone numbers have changed too. For all advertising enquiries, call 01233 653461; for editorial, call 01233 653475; for distribution, call: 01233 653470.

• *A revised version of this appeared in last week's paper.*

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Nasons at home

Is this company now the most powerful and influential player in shaping our county?

It is behind some of Kent's biggest developments past and present – but most have never heard of it. **Jamie Weir** reports

YOU may not recognise the name, or know any of the figures behind it, but is Land Securities now the most powerful organisation in Kent?

Its influence is certainly significant.

Last month it secured a £656m stake – around 30 per cent – in shopping complex Bluewater. It is already behind plans for 15,000 new homes at the 'garden city' in Ebbsfleet, and it owns many of the county's biggest-hitting retail centres, among them the likes of Westwood Cross in Broadstairs, Maidstone's Lockmeadow and the Eureka park in Ashford.

What's more it packs enormous financial clout. Last year its pre-tax profits were in the region of £1.1bn.

But just what is Land Securities?

"Basically, it buys, operates and develops land across the UK and Kent," explains the company's spokesman, Duncan Bonfield.

"We are a FTSE 100 company and the largest listed commercial property company in the UK. We have significant retail exposure in Kent.

"The company has taken a strategic decision to put more focus on Kent and the south east, as we see strong prospects for economic growth and business development. It's a growing region and higher footfall and disposable income are vital for our retail properties.

"We are a long-term, responsible developer – we aim to work with local communities to deliver the developments they need to thrive."

Today it has a market capitalisation – the total value of the company's shares – of more than £8bn, and a total portfolio of assets which were most recently valued at £11.45bn.

For such a mighty oak, its acorn was sown during modest times in wartime Britain.

Its modern-day roots stretch back to 1944 when surveyor Harold Samuel acquired the modest Land Securities Investment Trust. Back then, the company initially comprised three small houses in Kensington, and a small parcel of government stock.

But in the years after the war, Mr Samuel decided to focus on purchasing bomb sites. He bought cheap and developed them, hugely increasing their value.

He also shifted his focus to commercial properties. The company grew significantly over the next couple of years, with a 1948 issue of Investor's Chronicle magazine stating "meteoric seems the only fitting term to describe the growth in earning power of The Land Securities Investment Trust".

Its rise continued until it became the largest property development and management company of its type in the UK – a position it has retained. It now buys, develops, manages and owns real estate throughout the country – its current property portfolio in management has a 'rent roll' of around £500 million. That looks set to grow in Kent as rents rise throughout the county.

Not that it courts publicity. Its name tends to only emerge as, and when, a major development on land it owns hits the headlines. And not always for the right reason.

Among those plans which have attracted controversy and criticism is the proposal to build 5,000 new homes at Lodge Hill in Medway. A Special Site of Scientific Interest the plans appeared scuppered due to its population of nightingales.







MAJOR PLAYER: Land Securities has fingers in many Kent pies and five of our shopping centres including Bluewater (top) and Westwood Cross (above right) in Broadstairs, as well as land at Lodge Hill in Medway (above left)

LAND SECURITIES – HISTORY

WHEN Harold Samuel bought the Land Securities Investment Trust back in 1944 it would spark the beginning of an aggressive growth in the company which surfed on the back of post-war recovery.

Starting with just three terraced houses and a small chunk of government stock, by the end of the decade, the company had already acquired Devonshire House for £1 million in the West End of London.

It focused heavily on London's commercial market – particularly in the capital's West End.

The 1950s saw continued growth, with plots purchased including Oxford Street, Knightsbridge and the Adelphi Theatre. The company also took over Ravenscroft Properties – one of the most active developers in the country. It even attempted, but failed, to take over the Savoy Group.

The 1960s saw significant growth with the company's founder stating that it had more developments in hand than at any time in its past. It also acquired the Pan Am building in New York – one of the very few foreign acquisitions in the company's history.

It purchased one of its most famous buildings in the 1970s, buying the New Scotland Yard building.

But it was, perhaps not surprisingly, the property boom years of the 1980s which saw a massive development in the company after it issued £100m worth of new shares. Business Week magazine called it the 'largest rights issue in years'.

During the 1990s, the company's fortunes fared less well, with a dip in the property market which saw its portfolio drop for four years in a row. But, it marked a shift in the company's strategy, which decided that a focus on retail was the way forward in the future.

Harold Samuel was knighted in 1963 and became a peer in 1972. It was he who coined the phrase 'location, location, location'. He died in 1987.

It was also behind the Newnham Court scheme in Maidstone which was rejected by councillors just a few weeks ago – it had hoped to build a major retail park on the site of the Notcutts Garden Centre but was refused due to fears it would detract from the high street.

Ironically, Land Securities once owned Fremlin Walk, the retail hub in the town centre.

But perhaps the biggest project yet is in Ebbsfleet. Announced by Chancellor George Osborne earlier this year, it is designed to help ease the housing crisis in the area while dovetailing with the £2bn Paramount theme park scheme in Swanscombe.

Adds spokesman Mr Bonfield: "We bought the 1,100-acre Ebbsfleet site in 2003 and we're currently working to get that land ready for housebuilding. We have spent tens of millions of pounds getting the site to its current stage, and are likely to be working in the area for many years to come to deliver thousands of new homes."

In total it owns some 19 shopping centres and 16 retail parks across the UK. Five are in Kent – Bluewater, Westwood Cross, Newnham Court, Lockmeadow and Eureka.

In addition to once owning Fremlin Walk, which it sold for £92m in 2011, it was also behind the Whitefriars arcade in Canterbury, which it sold for £253m in 2007.

Since 2007, Land Securities has been classed as a REIT – a real estate investment trust. It means it's a company which owns, and in most cases operates, income-generating real estate.

By becoming a REIT it gave it a way to reduce its tax bill after the government announced that REITs would be given tax exemption on income and capital gains generated from their property rental business.

Its REIT status also makes it attractive to investors – many of its shareholders are pensions companies.

However, it still found itself in trouble in March, 2013, after HM Revenue & Customs took the company to a tribunal to accuse it of dodging its tax responsibilities. Land Securities lost, with the HMRC director general for business tax, Jim Harra, stating it was guilty of "flagrant tax avoidance".

But despite that, its clout remains undiminished.

And Deutsche Bank – the German investment bank – is confident it will continue to grow.

Martin Allen, the bank's head of pan-European property research, told KoS: "Land Securities is well-run and conservatively financed, and so is in a good position to build on its strong track record."

However, he does feel the company is overvalued currently, recommending that investors sell their shares in the company before the value falls.

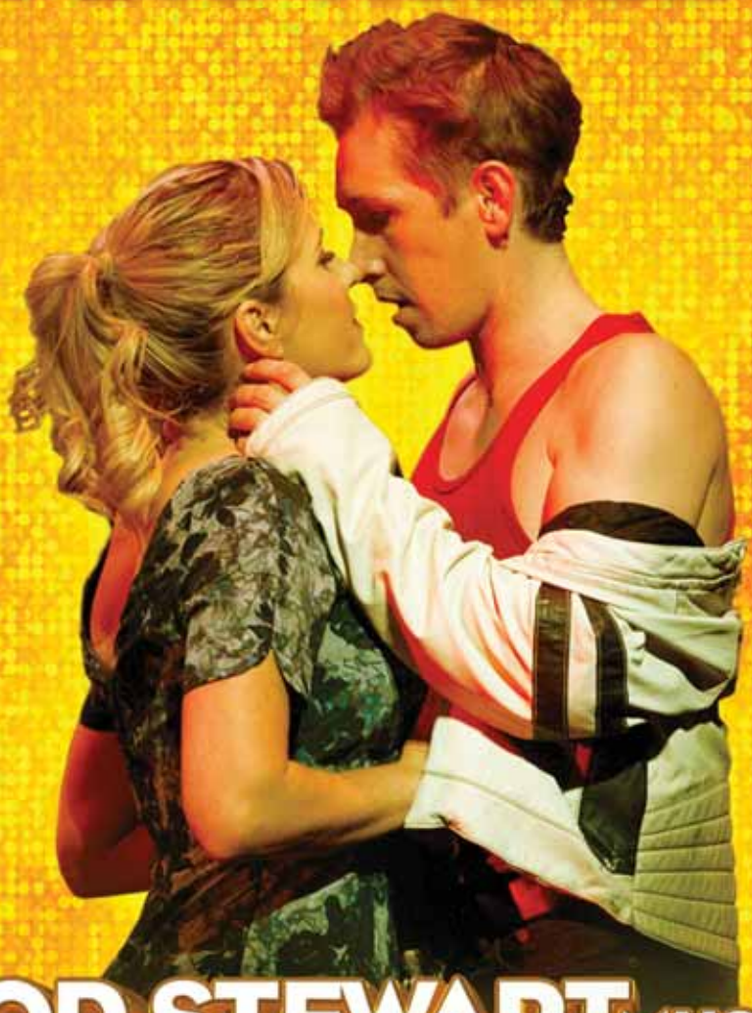
The British Property Federation – a group representing the interests of all those involved in real estate ownership and investment – told KoS Land Securities is doing a good job in Kent.

BPF chief executive Liz Peace said: "Being a high-profile public company brings greater responsibilities and greater visibility, and this is fundamentally a good thing for the property industry, the places they invest in and the communities they serve."

■ **What do you think? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

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Tory high-flyer Jeremy Hunt's 'naming and shaming' plan has been widely criticised by the county's GPs and medical experts who claim the proposals are unworkable. **Maria Chiorando** investigates...



SOUND BITES?: Health secretary Jeremy Hunt (inset) has been criticised by many – among them Dover Labour councillor Mike Eddy (below)

Health secretary's plan to shame GPs on cancer diagnosis creates storm

LOCAL experts have rounded on health secretary Jeremy Hunt, describing his new proposal to name and shame GPs, over their ability to diagnose cancer, as a deliberate ploy to discredit doctors in order to privatise the NHS.

Under the new plans, GPs who fail to spot cancer quickly enough could end up with their details published on NHS websites.

Mr Hunt insists that measures could help improve the prognosis of cancer patients.

He said: "We need to do much better.

"Cancer diagnosis levels around the country vary significantly and we must do much more to improve both the level of diagnosis and to bring those GP practices with poor referral rates up to the standards of the best."

Under his plans, surgeries will be ranked as 'green' on the NHS Choices website if they quickly refer patients to hospital when they are showing possible signs of cancer.

But if they miss too many cancer diagnoses or if patients have to go for repeat appointments before being sent for tests then they will be classed as 'red'.

Unsurprisingly, the proposals have provoked controversy in some corners, with the Royal College of GPs calling it "crude" and also claiming the system could result in patients indiscriminately visiting specialists.

The plans also do not take into account how cancer is diagnosed.

"Fortunately, cancer is very uncommon," explains Mike Parks, who is a doctor and the medical secretary of the Kent Local Medical Committee.

"GPs see thousands of patients and it's quite difficult to identify those who have a really serious condition, but GPs have a lot of training."

Retired Maidstone GP Paul Hobday agrees: "Most GPs would say this is an example of a health minister who does not understand how GPs work.

"If he did understand the processes, he would not have come up with these ridiculous statements which could be seen as nothing more than a political stunt.

"The beauty of continuity of care means GPs can bring people back if they are not sure if they have cancer or not. If a patient take three visits to diagnose, this is not a bad thing, and in fact GPs will purposefully take time to make a correct diagnosis.

"Hospitals would be swamped if we sent everyone we immediately suspected could have cancer, rather than properly considering the case. This would also unnecessarily scare patients. To avoid this, GPs should deal with these diagnoses properly."

There are already systems in place when it comes to cancer diagnosis.

Dr Parks explained: "In 2000, 'The Cancer Plan' was introduced. GPs are trained to look out for a number of symptoms, or what we call 'red flags' which the plan details.

"If there is a chance the patient has cancer they should be referred in order to rule out the possibility, as we know the earlier we can diagnose cancer, the better it is for the patient.

"Services in secondary care can only cope with a number of secondary referrals. If that were to double overnight, the people who actually have cancer might have longer waits.

"We should be encouraging GPs to make good referrals, putting pressure on them does not benefit patients.

"We don't welcome the prospect of 'naming and shaming'."

Labour councillor Mike Eddy, from Dover District Council, has had a long involvement in health issues in the county.

As a non-executive director of East Kent Health Authority and then the Kent and Medway Strategic Health Authority, he was then a governor of the Kent LINk, the local health watchdog. He continues to serve as Labour spokesman on the health overview and scrutiny committee.

> **"GPs see thousands of patients and it's quite difficult to identify those who have a really serious condition, but GPs have a lot of training"**
>
> **Dr Mike Parks,** Kent Local Medical Committee



"Most doctors," he says, "being sensible, will look at all possibilities that the symptoms suggest, eliminate the less serious options first, then move into diagnostic tests.

"That is the way to conduct things."

Much has been made of the fact the proposals would be unworkable.

Dr Hobday said: "The devil is in the detail. If names of GPs were published, would patient names also be published so doctors could defend themselves against the allegations?

"And who would decide if the diagnosis was too slow? There are many types of cancer, and they should be treated differently. It's just a totally unworkable plan – the health secretary should be ashamed of himself."

Cllr Eddy added: "It sounds like typical Jeremy Hunt, to be honest.

"It's all sound bite and no substance, after all. This is classic Jeremy Hunt, jumping up and down in the Press, saying GPs are terrible and that the health system is falling apart.

"The NHS is doing a terrific job, and could be doing an even better one if Mr Hunt would stop going around wasting money on reorganising it every five minutes."

Many doctors feel the NHS has come under undue criticism recently.

Dr Hobday said: "Cancer is a very emotive topic, and my heart sank when I heard the new proposals. This is just another political gimmick.

"Conspiracy theorists would say it is a deliberate ploy to discredit GPs as they would be an unnecessary part of a privatised health care system.

"It's clear most politicians believe in privatisation, and the ongoing bashing of GPs is part of this.

"An independent American assessment of world health care recently claimed the NHS tops other systems, with the US system coming last.

"But British MPs just don't say how good our health care is."

And it seems patients agree with the doctors.

One cancer survivor, who preferred to remain anonymous, told KoS of her experience.

"My GP was efficient," she explained. "I had cancer twice and they couldn't have worked faster.

"I think the guidelines are unnecessary. It's not an easy thing to diagnose anyway, and symptoms don't present the same for each person even though it's the same type of cancer.

"I think the guidelines are over the top. I think the naming and shaming is unfair. Doctors are human beings, and patients don't always tell doctors what they need to know.

"My doctor was excellent."

Dr Parks had the last say: "GPs are human beings and we don't want machines looking after us, we want people providing good treatment.

"There are not many GPs who are failing their patients in that respect."

Medical expert claims action must be taken now or our health will be in danger, reports **Jamie Weir**

Warning shortage of GPs could lead us into healthcare 'crisis'

A LEADING academic claims the county is "sleepwalking into crisis" unless more young doctors can be persuaded to become GPs.

Professor Stephen Peckham, director of the University of Kent's centre for health services studies, told KoS almost 50 per cent of Kent's GPs are over 55 years old and likely to retire within the next 10 years.

This, he says, will lead to a chronic shortage within healthcare practices in Kent.

He said: "At a time when governments are seeking to expand the role of general practice to provide more care in the community there is a national GP shortage.

"Around the country many practices are finding it hard to recruit GPs and with many due to retire over the next 10 years the problem is likely to get worse. GP recruitment is down around 15 per cent across the UK, and a shortage is building.

"This is true in Kent and one of the reasons we're working with Health Education England to develop and support training for new GPs.

"The cause is a combination of things, but general practice is less glamorous that other types of medicine like surgery and there are also issues around GPs feeling squeezed on a number of levels.

"Their salaries are not what you would expect and working hours can be long. General practice is under real pressure as a result of these factors."

His comments come at a time when Kent County Council (KCC) has just finished consulting on its Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The strategy will set the priorities for the NHS, social care and public health services in the county until 2017.

One of the main strands of the plan is to move care away from hospitals, and into the community. This will mean healthcare relies more on GPs, nurses and local surgeries.

Roger Gough, the KCC cabinet member in charge of health reform, explained the reasoning behind this to KoS: "We are seeking to ease the pressure on hospitals and move towards a type of local care in the community.



"We want to create integrated services and build up teams in communities who are able to tackle the full range of healthcare problems without resorting to hospitalisation.

"It's fair to say that there is pressure on GP numbers with problems not only in recruitment, but also with the profession facing a number of retirements in the next few years.

"But we are trying to combat that. There was a national call to action in July last year when NHS England published a paper setting out a range of challenges facing healthcare. Within the call there is a lot about changes to GPs. There is a trend towards integrating services with larger local hubs rather than the single doctor surgeries of the past."

The idea of integrating services is one which Prof Peckham is in favour of, but he also feels that with this type of community care, there will need to be a focus on its delivered in the future.

> **"Unless more medical students can be persuaded to train and then enter general practice in Kent there will be a crisis in the service in the future"**
>
> **Professor Stephen Peckham,** University of Kent

He told KoS: "There's no doubt that this is the right direction for healthcare. Moving it towards integrated care in the community, rather than hospitalisation is definitely the right direction. The big question will be how it is done in practice.

"The workload for GPs is likely to increase but because this type of working is unknown for many, it may make young doctors think about specialising in general practice."

Prof Peckham also took aim at the county's levels of development, making the point Canterbury alone will require an extra 30 GPs to deal with the number of new houses aiming to be built and there are many other areas looking to expand with similar gusto. These areas will also require new GPs.





GPS: Prof Stephen Peckham (above) and Cllr Roger Gough (below)

He said: "In Kent we not only need to increase the numbers of GPs and other community health professionals to meet changes in the way we provide healthcare services, but also planned house building over the next 10 years will place increased demands on general practice services.

"To add an extra 15,000 houses to the Canterbury district will create a huge strain on services. If the situation continues there won't be enough GPs to provide the services required and there may well also be issues with whether there are enough practice nurses as well."

Cllr Gough accepted the target for housebuilding in Canterbury is high, but said it may actually help provide better healthcare services as a result.

He said: "There are lots of areas in Kent which have high housing targets, but that may actually provide some of the solution for strained services like GP practices. With lots of development, councils can ask the developers for contributions towards improving services so it may actually help to get new surgeries built."

But he did accept there is a serious challenge for Kent in the future, saying: "We do have greater than average pressures on the county and it is going to prove challenging in the future.

"But, there are other ways to do things and the current GP model is likely to change as we seek to switch to integrated working, drawing different healthcare professionals together. Community hubs will help to make things more efficient for GPs in the future."

Prof Peckham added: "Given the recruitment, retirement and development issues, pressures on local general practices will increase. Unless more medical students can be persuaded to train and then enter general practice in Kent there will be a crisis in the service in the future.

"We need to be planning for this now, before it becomes an emergency."

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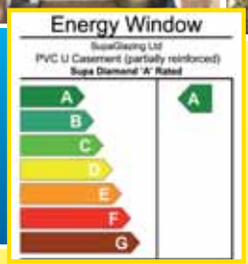
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Steel arch will reflect bravery and sacrifice of troops sent to Western Front

Monument sits at top of Folkestone's Road of Remembrance to commemorate route to First World War battlefields, writes **Chris Murphy...**

IT PROVED a battle to get it built, but a commemorative archway to mark the final route of thousands of soldiers during the First World War is now installed and ready for the royal seal of approval.

The arch in Folkestone is set to be one of the most significant memorials to mark the centenary of the start of the Great War.

It will be officially opened in August by Prince Harry.

The town was Britain's gateway to the battlefields of Europe during the conflict, taking troops to the killing fields of France and Belgium.

Some 10 million troops marched through the town to the docks where they boarded vessels to carry them across the Channel.

And for years a local campaign group called, Step Short, has wanted it permanently marked.

It gets its name from how soldiers were instructed to reduce their stride as they walked down the steep hill from the town centre and to the port, to prevent them falling.

Today it's known as the Road of Remembrance.

The giant £500,000 stainless steel arch is being created at the top of that hill. Prince Harry will unveil it on August 4 to mark almost 100 years since war began.

It's not the first time an arch has been situated on the road.

During the 1930s a temporary arch was built on the site to mark the Coronation of George VI , but was taken down shortly afterwards. The new arch is here to stay.

It now stands proud on Folkestone's skyline, which will also include a statue of an infantry soldier under its northern side and a compass that points to the nations that took part. The arch rises to about 40ft high and is 40ft wide.

Project architect Philip Gearing said: "This is an international monument. People who came here were from Asia, Africa, North America and Australia – so I tried to think of a shape relevant and applicable to all those people."

There have been objectors though in recent years with concerns over the public money being spent on it and its scale.

One local resident objected to the council by saying the arch will "not be a memorial to the soldiers; it will be a memorial to the vanity of a handful of people including the MP, and has hardly any public support".

Sandgate parish councillor Gary Fuller has nothing against the arch being built, but is angry public money is being used.

He told us: "I was never against it in principle, I am against it being paid for by public money."

He claims Shepway and Kent County Council are putting in £200,000 each, adding: "For a £600,000 original cost, we are looking at 66 per cent of it being paid for by the taxpayer.

"This as a time when people are being hit with things like the bedroom tax and frontline expenditure is going down and the parking strategy in the town is closing local businesses.

"I also find some of the costs questionable too, but I am not personally against the idea of having a memorial arch, if that's what they want to do.

"But they need to fund it through donations, not by grabbing from the public purse."

KCC said it has actually put in £150,000, and a spokesman for Step Short confirmed Shepway District Council had given £200,000 plus Folkestone Town Council added a further £16,000.

The charity has also had funding from the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust – bankrolled by the former Saga boss turned philanthropist. It paid £5,000 towards the costs of digitising the names in the Harbour Canteen visitors' books and contributed a further £700 towards the Step Short website; and contributed £30,000 towards Step Short's education programme plus £95,000 towards the arch.

The contribution by Lend Lease in the shape of free project management for the entire arch construction phase was originally estimated as being in the order of £75,000 but is likely to have increased, said Short Step.

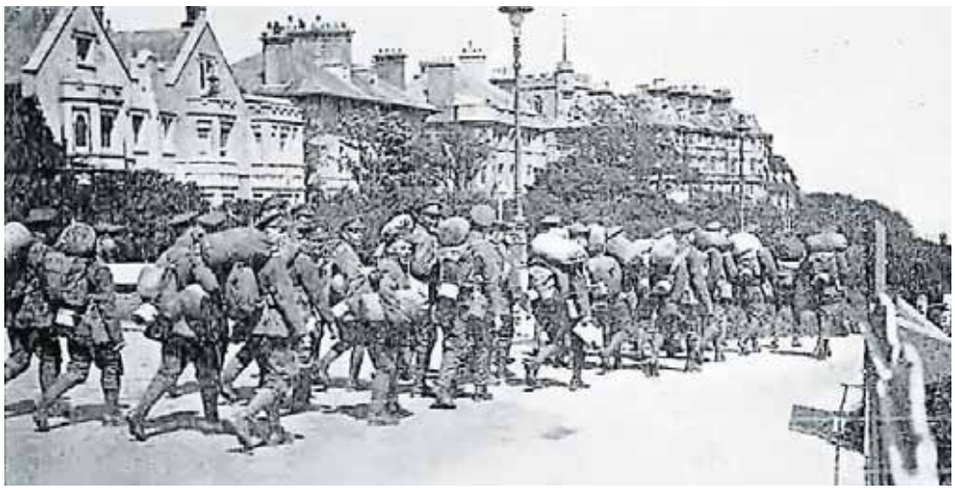
After seven years of planning, Paul Emden, the finance director of Step Short, said; "The volunteers who make up the Step Short committee believe that Folkestone's role in the First World War, and the bravery and sacrifice of the men and women who passed through the town

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> **"This is an international monument. People who came here were from Asia, Africa, North America and Australia – so I tried to think of a shape relevant to all those people"**
>
> **Philip Gearing,** Project architect for the new memorial



ARCH: Stainless structure sits atop Folkestone's Road to Remembrance and has a 40ft span. It will be officially unveiled by HRH Prince Harry in August



As new recruits left for trenches, the dead and wounded returned alongside fleeing refugees

THE Great War of 1914-1918 would see Kent – and Folkestone in particular – play a key role.

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Soon the harrowing sight of dead and horribly injured men returning was eerily combined with that of fresh-faced youngsters passing them heading towards the killing fields of the Western Front.

The 1915 move from Southampton to Folkestone as the sole port turned the town into Britain's biggest military camp, including thousands of well-paid Canadians who poured money into the local economy and took home more than a few British brides.

As well as returning injured soldiers, Folkestone had to cope with a flood of Belgian refugees fleeing from the fighting, as well as the many Red Cross nurses.

The nature of trenches and lack of accurate weapons meant progress could only be made by using sheer numbers of troops, literally throwing them by the thousand at well dug in positions in the hope the enemy would flee. Often, these charges were in vain, and it was Folkestone that had to mop up the blood of those tragic victims.

The town, once a bustling seaside retreat for well to do Victorians, was taking on a shade of grey as the uniforms of millions poured through the streets, with many walking to their deaths down the Road of Remembrance. The town, for far too many, was their last vision of home.

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MEMORIAL: Folkestone's role as an important port of embarkation for troops heading to the Western Front is being marked with a 40ft stainless steel arch

« PAGE 15

on their way to the Western Front, needs to be recognised on this important anniversary of the start of the conflict.

"The arch is a dramatic reminder of the sacrifice they made and will be an impressive addition to The Leas. It has echoes of a temporary arch that was erected at the very top of the Road of Remembrance for the Coronation of George VI in 1937."

Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins, chairman of the Step Short project, is delighted its opening will be marked by the young royal.

He said: "We are honoured that Prince Harry will be guest of honour.

"The arch stands over the route taken by millions of service personnel on their journey to the war. It has been built in memory of their sacrifices and in recognition of the role played by Folkestone in the war effort as an important port of embarkation to and from the Western Front.

> **"It has been built in memory of their sacrifices and in recognition of the role played by Folkestone in the war effort..."**
>
> **Damian Collins,**
> Step Short project chairman

"The unveiling will be the culmination of seven years of work by the Folkestone Step Short project, which was set up by members of the local community."

KCC leader Paul Carter added: "The arch is a fitting memorial to the sacrifice of millions of soldiers and others who passed through the town on the way to the front line, and I am delighted that the county council was able to help make it happen.

"The eyes of the world will be on Kent on August 4 when we will be paying tribute to the role the county played in the conflict 100 years ago."

David Monk, leader of Shepway District Council, added: "This project is all about creating a continuing reminder of the enormity of the sacrifices made during the First World War."

■ **Do you think it is money well spent? Shouldn't we erect lasting memorials to those brave souls who paid the ultimate sacrifice 100 years ago? Share you views and join the debate. Write to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kos-media.co.uk.**

Why is KCC spending our money on this?

KENT County Council says the cost of designing and building the arch is about £560,000 and it has committed £150,000 to the project.

This was approved by the director of economic development under delegated authority as it supports the visitor economy and regeneration.

The council said: "Kent played a critical role in both world wars as the frontline county. It is fitting that we support commemorations across the county and in particular the memorial arch in Folkestone.

"It will provide a lasting legacy to the many that left these shores from Folkestone and paid the ultimate sacrifice as it replaces the original, long since lost, arch in Folkestone. It will be a new attraction and destination for everyone as an important and innovative learning tool for our children and a valuable tourism asset for Folkestone and Kent generally.

"The visitor economy in Kent is worth £64million per annum and it supports around 64,000 jobs. The arch will add to the overall offer for visitors to Folkestone and east Kent."

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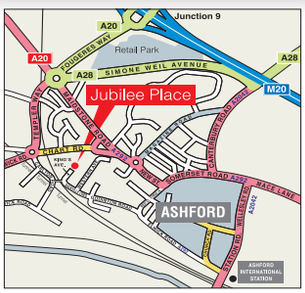
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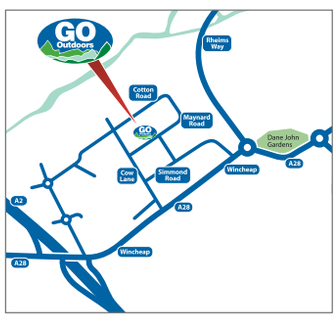
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A BRIGHT IDEA? Solar farms are becoming a more common site around the county

Shining a light on county's renewable energy resources

With energy demands now beginning to exceed supply, the need for less reliance on ever-decreasing fossil fuels is a major issue. Maria Chiorando looks at how Kent is being affected.

ONCE heralded as the solution to our over-reliance on finite natural resources and the uncertainty of Middle East oil supplies, renewable energies remain a thorny topic.

From the towering wind turbines that dominate Romney Marsh to the increasing number of fields and homes adorned with the distinctive panels designed to capture and convert sunlight, Kent is increasingly becoming defined by power.

It has always been so, of course.

The imposing concrete bulk of the nuclear reactor sat on the shingle of Dungeness, or the now defunct oil and coal-fired facilities in the likes of Hoo and Richborough, become significant landmarks as well as important providers of power to the National Grid.

But as the country's energy demands begin to exceed supply, are the wind farms and solar panels that dot our horizons and landscapes generating enough power for our needs?

And, perhaps more significantly, is local opposition preventing their widespread adoption?

While there is no denying they continue to contribute a significant proportion of our energy needs, it remains a small, and often unreliable, percentage. After all, when the wind stops blowing, so the turbines on and off our coastlines stop spinning.

What is more, questions continue to be asked over the cost-effective nature of transporting energy created by offshore wind farms back to land or the power of solar.

In addition, there are increasing concerns over the location of such renewable technologies.

For many, the turbines on the Romney Marsh are eyesores; the Kentish Flats wind farm is considered by others a blot on the landscape off the Whitstable and Herne Bay coasts; and plans for a solar farm near Sittingbourne have ruffled the feathers of many.

Yet the power-generation landscape has changed dramatically in recent years.

With ever-increasing demands from an ever-growing population, there has been a sea change of opinion.

Nuclear has once again found itself back in favour with central government, and there is even an expensive link being created between Kent and Belgium – the Nemo link – which will pump excess energy from the Continent into the National Grid to ensure our lights never go out.

A similar scheme called ElecLink is planned to run through the Channel Tunnel: a giant cable linking the UK and France, which will be able to carry one gigawatt between the two countries, with the UK standing to benefit from France's surplus power supply.

Like enormous power extension cables, it is perhaps the clearest indication of how, as an island, we are simply not generating enough power.

So why, after all the hype, is renewable energy not creating that additional supply we need?

Ian Driver is a Green Party councillor on Thanet District Council.

He said: "New figures show that in 2013 renewable energy accounted for around 5.2 per cent of final energy consumption.

"It was 4.2 per cent in 2012, so it is going in the right direction but still a long way from the Government target of 20 per cent of energy generated from renewable sources by 2020.

"Ultimately, we'd like to see 100 per cent of energy coming from renewable sources, and we do think that is realistic, long term.

"In Kent, we have access to a lot of resources. We have a lot of wind and sun, although we don't generate as much solar power in the county as you might expect."

But that could be set to change, according to James Beard, a spokesman for the Solar Trade Association (STA), a not-for-profit organisation that represents the solar sector.

Mr Beard said: "Solar is one of the growth areas in renewable energy.

"It is the most popular energy source in terms of popular opinion, with a poll showing 85 per cent of the public are in favour of solar energy.

"In 2012, there were three solar farms generating over five megawatts in the south east; in 2013, that number had risen to 28 farms, with a further 49 requests for planning permission.

"It is one of the growth areas in renewable energy.

"There are some dangers, in terms of the farms being unpopular – if they are on high-grade agricultural land, for example.

"Where the solar farms go is important, and the public and local community have to want them."

It may appear a fringe issue, but it is an increasingly significant one when it comes to renewable energies – an aesthetical debate that can set whole communities against certain endeavours.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England in Kent (CPRE) agrees.

Marketing manager Vicki Ellis explains: "CPRE supports alternative, renewable power sources but believes they need to be carefully located to achieve minimal impact on the environment and on our future well-being.

"We recognise solar power has an important role as part of its application in appropriate situations, such as rooftops as in proposals to direct subsidies towards smaller installations.

"Kent contains a very large proportion of the nation's grade one and grade two agricultural land and almost all of the remaining land is grade three.

"The fact that higher-grade land is more abundant in Kent should not be used to justify its use for solar power generation."

They would therefore suggest that applications to build solar farms on high grade agricultural land be automatically declined and that more power is generated using rooftop panels.

The use of these panels is certainly

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MY TRIP TO THE LONDON ARRAY WIND FARM...

"THE sun rose over calm seas in the morning.

I was glad. Conditions were perfect for the boat journey I would be taking out to London Array's wind farm: the largest offshore wind farm in the world.

A trip to see the turbines close up in all their glory and learn about the way wind power is contributing to the UK's renewable energy targets.

The wind farm takes up 100 sq km in the outer Thames estuary, between the coasts of Essex and Kent, comprising 175 turbines.

The turbines are placed between 650m and 1,200m apart and are all interconnected by cables, which are buried in the seabed. These same cables take the electricity from the turbines to the offshore substations and ultimately to the National Grid.

Decked out in life jackets and hard hats, we boarded the boat at Ramsgate and travelled the 12 miles off the coast to see these huge structures which seem to grow out of the waves.

It is an awe-inspiring sight; the turbines are taller than the London Eye, reaching a height of 147m to the tip of the blade at its highest point, and grow almost implausibly out of the water in precise rows.

We saw engineers working on the blades; even close up the humans look ant-like, underlining the massive scale of these structures.

Because of the placid weather conditions, the turbines were not turning, but it was easy to imagine the power they must generate when at full pelt.

Engineers make this trip daily, and it can take up to two hours, on top of the highly specialised and detailed work on the turbines; it is a gruelling job. All the turbines need regular servicing, as well as any specific technical issues that may arise and need to be fixed.

In summer months this is easier due to the weather conditions, whereas in the winter the shorter daylight hours mean there is less time to work.

They stir plenty of emotions from those onshore, but the truth is up close they are enormous and really rather amazing."



OFFSHORE THING: London Array's wind farm off the Kent coast is the largest in the world

How does an offshore wind farm work?

WIND farms help to tackle climate change and global warming because, unlike traditional methods of producing energy, such as coal, oil and gas-operated power stations, turbines do not produce harmful carbon emissions.

Mike O'Hare, general manager at London Array, explained: "Offshore wind farms can generate more power than onshore farms because there are more powerful winds at sea than on land.

"Another benefit is the space available – it would be practically impossible to find a 100km sq area of land within the UK."

But there are disadvantages too.

"Because of the nature of being out at sea, it is more costly and difficult to build the turbines' structures and substations," he said.

The effects of offshore wind farms on marine life are not fully understood, but it is believed there are advantages and disadvantages.

The drilling is said to disturb mammals during the construction phase; however, during the operational phase it is believed the structures provide a surface for barnacles and other sea life.

During the operational phase, electricity is generated when the wind turns the blades on the turbines, explains Mr O'Hare.

"This is then taken from the turbines to offshore substations through cables which are buried in the seabed. When the electricity reaches the offshore substations, the voltage is boosted to reduce the transmission losses, then export cables running from the substations bring the electricity to the shore."

This electricity feeds straight into the high-voltage network and is then carried into the National Grid.

Quite how much then serves the people of Kent is, apparently, nigh-on impossible to calculate.



« PAGE 19

something that is seeing huge growth in the south east, claims Sam Courage, a solar designer at Carmichael Browns, which designs, installs and maintains solar panels.

"Fitting solar panels is definitely becoming more popular," he said. "We tend to specialise in businesses now, as there has been so much interest in that sector.

"Kent is as good as anywhere in the south to generate solar power because of the amount of sunshine.

"We are rapidly running out of fossil fuels, but light is not going to run out within the next million years."

The impending scarcity of fossils fuels is one reason we need to start relying more on renewables, but it is not the only one.

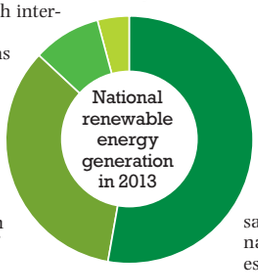
Cllr Driver explains: "Traditional energy production using fossil fuels creates carbon emissions, which are environmentally harmful.

"In contrast, the carbon emissions produced by renewable sources such as wind farms are either very low or non-existent, so this is significant in protecting the environment."

Also, lowered supplies of North Sea gas mean that the fuel is now being imported, which is in turn pushing up prices.

Harvesting natural resources such as wind or the sun means that although initial set-up costs are high, these energy resources are cost-effective in the long run as the wind and sun are obviously free and available.

Finally, it is forecast around one third of the UK's conventional power stations will close over the next 15 years.



WIND 53%

BIO 34%

HYDRO 9%

SOLAR 4%

It is impossible to predict exactly how much energy can be generated through natural sources, such as the wind, as that is dependent on the weather.

It is therefore necessary to create a combination of energy sources, including fossil fuels, nuclear and of course renewable energy in order to guarantee a steady supply of power into the future.

"Kent is a leader in lots of different forms of power generation," said Philip Jones, director of Maxim PR in Tunbridge Wells.

"There is an extremely diverse energy mix in the county, including the country's largest onshore and offshore wind farms [Romney Marsh and London Array], Grain's now defunct power plant and nuclear power stations."

This diversity is something that should serve the region well as it moves into a new era of power generation.



Fracking industry is splitting public opinion

FEW issues are as sure to make hackles rise as much as the contentious fracking debate.

With reports claiming that 4.4 billion barrels of shale oil are under the Weald Basin – a stretch of land which crosses through the Home Counties and into west Kent – it has become a huge issue for local campaigners.

"There are no benefits to fracking," claims the Green Party's Ian Driver.

"We can look at where it's been done before, and the environmental harm it causes outweighs any possible benefits."

Fracking involves drilling into the earth, and using chemicals and water to blast out trapped gas and oil.

Critics claim it can contaminate water supplies and even trigger earthquakes.

Pat Marsh, secretary of East Kent Against Fracking, explained some of the negative impacts.

"To make extracting gas in Kent viable, with or without fracking, thousands of wells will have to be drilled, covering huge areas," he said.

"Community life will be destroyed with constant heavy vehicle movements through villages and along narrow country lanes day and night, not to mention the noise and light pollution involved in 24/7 operations.

"In spite of industry cover-ups, there is also now considerable evidence from other parts of the world to prove beyond doubt that these kinds of operations can never be made safe, even with the tightest regulation.

"The risk of irretrievable contamination to our water is unacceptably high. This would be a catastrophe in our county, where the underground chalk aquifers provide our basic water supply in one of the most water-stressed parts of the country.

"If this industry were ever to become established in the Garden of England, it would mean the end of agriculture and food production, not to mention tourism."

Speaking to KoS last year, however, Prime Minister David Cameron insisted there is a part for fracking to play in the nation's power mix.

He said: "We have to recognise that a fracking revolution has taken place in America and we ought to be thinking about it here.

"Recent reports have shown we may have twice as much shale gas as previously thought and so this is an industry we should be encouraging.

"But we want to make sure it's an industry we encourage for community benefit as well."















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Caught on film: Project snaps a



Tuesday, Jan 22, 2013 - The Perfect 10 - Michael Marsh



Sunday, July 28, 2013 - Celebration - George Fisk

Images capture every day of 2013 in Whitstable through the lens of those who live there – recording the good, the bad and the odd, come rain or shine, as **Chris Britcher** reports...

TAKE a quick look online and there are numerous websites which allow budding photographers to record their year by taking and uploading a picture each and every day.

Yet what about applying the same concept to an entire community? To create and manage a project which has a town as its focus, and its photographers anyone who wants to capture the town they know – good or bad – across all four seasons, come rain or shine?

For several years now, Kent Creative Arts has been facilitating just that with its innovative 365 Project.

And now it's preparing to showcase the fruits of last year's labours: 365 A Year in the Life of Whitstable.

The response to the project was phenomenal. More than 145 photographers submitted some 3,800 images on everything from mobile phones to top of the range SLR cameras.

It follows in the footsteps of other successful projects in Faversham, Canterbury and Sheppey, and discussions are ongoing as to where to go next in the county.

Nathalie Banaigs is director of Kent Creative Arts, a not-for-profit cultural organisation which relies on donations and grants to exist.

It coordinates what it believes is a pioneering photographic project.

"I'm certainly not aware of any other photographic exhibition which engages the entire community like the 365 Project does," she says. "That's not to say there aren't others out there, but I'm not aware of them.

"The idea is for people who live and work in these towns to capture every aspect of it. We've had images of rubbish on the beach, for example, because someone felt it important to highlight it. We get images of anything and everything to do with an area which are as interesting to those who live there as they are to visitors.

"The idea is for the pictures to tell a story rather than simply being excellent photographs."

The culmination of the work will be an exhibition which opens this weekend and runs throughout the summer.

It will feature all 365 images selected by the judges and taken on every day of the year. Those same images will then form part of a book which will be sold after the event.

So where next for the project?

As with so many things, it ultimately comes down to money.

While it sounds straightforward, each 365 project takes around 18 months to manage, with a website for hosting images, marketing, communications, exhibitions and the books all carrying a price tag which needs to be underwritten.

Miss Banaigs explained: "This year was poor for sponsorships what with the impact of the recession still being felt. But it is a challenge for us to do it without sufficient support.

"So when it comes to where we will go next, it will depend, before it can go any further, on us securing the money to do so – whether that is from donations from businesses and individuals or grants. We've named the place before and then attempted to secure sponsorship and ending up losing money, so we need to secure at least most of the funding first."

The 365: A Year in the Life of Whitstable exhibition runs at the Whitstable Museum & Gallery in Oxford Street until August 31. It is open Thursdays to Sundays 11am to 4.30pm.

■ **To help support future 365 Projects contact Nathalie Banaigs at Kent Creative Arts on 01795 597 576.**

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year in the life of popular town



Thursday, Aug 15 - Moonlight over Whitstable - Conrad Skillen



Saturday, Jan 5, 2013 - In her element - Janice McGuinness



Thursday, Mar 14, 2013 - Putting the world to rights - George Fisk



Wednesday, Mar 6 - From calm to serenity - Michael Marsh

365 PROJECT... IN NUMBERS

1,440
Photographs submitted for the Faversham project in 2011

1,502
Submitted for Canterbury project in 2011

1,476
Images donated for Sheppey project in 2011

3,800
Images sent in for Whitstable 2013

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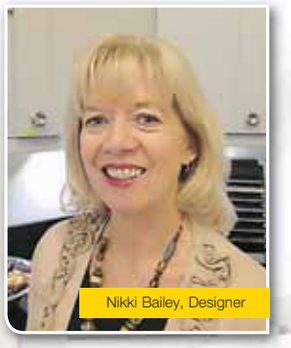
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Competition

Tickets to Lounge on the Farm 2014 could be yours!



IT IS one of the highlights of the county's cultural calendar and Lounge on the Farm is set to return for a full day and night of festival fun.

And you can be there for free thanks to our great competition.

Returning for its ninth and final year at Merton Farm in Canterbury on August 2, big names include Fun Lovin' Criminals, Peter Hook and The Light, The Subways, DJ Yoda and The Trans-Siberian Marching Band, Courtney Pine, LotF's very own house band Dub Pistols, plus DJ Alfredo and much more.

All this supported by Kent's amazing home grown talent including Coco and The Butterfield, Intermission Project, Brendon Powers and Sam Sure.

The Little Lounge will be looking after mums, dads and kids with our very own Red Coats helped by Canterbury Day Nursery and The National Childbirth Trust.

And with appearances from everyone's favourite fairy princess and elf, Ben & Holly, the kids aren't going to want to miss this one.

Lounge on the Farm is famous for its amazing street food – you can dine around the world in Kent with a walking feast of Kolkatan dosas, hand-thrown pizza, Beijing crepes, Jerk chicken, Mediterranean barbecue, our very own local game, Kentish ice cream, and fish from our Kent coast. All washed down with a pint of Kent Best at Kent's best festival.

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■ Lounge on the Farm is held on a...

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Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Winners will be selected from all correct entries.

The promoter's decision is final.

Usual terms and conditions apply. Full details via www.kentnews.co.uk.

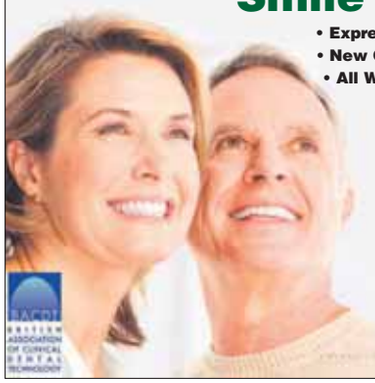
Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of July 15, 2014 your entry will not be valid, but you still may be charged.

■ SMS services are provided by BBA Digital Helpline telephone 0844 3572403. Alternatively enter by post to Lounge Competition, Archant KOS Media, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP.





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Dog-fostering scheme saves lives and leads to much healthier pets

Project seeks temporary carers while permanent owners are found, saving abandoned pooches from being put to sleep, as **Maria Chiorando** reports

A PIONEERING scheme has been launched designed to save the lives of abandoned dogs facing being put to sleep.

It's all part of the dog-fostering plan set up by the community services team at Medway Council.

The scheme encourages people to temporarily open their home to a dog who doesn't have anywhere else to live.

Stray hounds who have found themselves either lost or abandoned by their owners currently face a bleak future.

Once picked up by community wardens, they spend a week in the care of the council at Jasmil Kennels near Sittingbourne.

If the dogs are microchipped, there is a greater chance that they can be reunited with their families.

But if the owner can't be traced through microchipping, and does not otherwise come forward, the kennels take responsibility for the animals and will try to rehome them.

However, with increasing numbers and the costs involved of accommodating the hapless canines, unfortunately, time is short, and if a loving home cannot be found, the hapless canine faces being put down.

But with the new scheme it is hoped an alternative, and happier, ending can be achieved for the pet.

An early end was almost the fate that befell Butch, a Jack Russell, facing his last day at the kennels.

Luckily, Margaret Christison, a pensioner from Cuxton, fostered him.

He lived with her for a week before finding his new home.

She said: "I only had him for a week but Butch was adorable and never left my side and, although I was heartbroken to see him go, I'm delighted he is with a loving family now."

According to Adam Levy, the centre manager at Dogs Trust Canterbury, there are many reasons that a dog might find itself homeless.

He explained: "Animals often end up homeless due to a change of circumstances. Especially in the current climate, you have partners having to go back to work and the dog is being left alone for longer hours.

"Another reason is people can no longer afford a dog financially, perhaps because of veterinary bills.

"You get relationship break-ups and other emotional situations. There are a lot of reasons and it's usually through no fault of the dog's.

"People are usually sad to have to give up their dogs, not always, but many people are quite upset about it."

These are the dogs that get handed in to animal charities or refuges; many, however, are left on the streets as strays, which is where the council comes in.



FOSTERING FAN: Margaret Christison from Cuxton with Butch

A spokesman for Medway Council said: "There are many reasons a dog ends up wandering the streets – sometimes it's simply accidental and they've escaped from their owners, other times it can be more sinister as dogs are deliberately abandoned."

> **"We hope our new initiative will provide a better future for dogs who, through no fault of their own, have found themselves on the streets"**
>
> **Peter Hicks,** Medway Council

In 2013, Medway Council picked up some 1,000 strays, and that number is on the increase.

One thing the council advises is that people microchip their pets, as then it is easier to trace owners should they get lost.

Of the strays picked up, about 300 of them are returned to their owners each year because they are microchipped.

The more dogs that can be returned, and the more quickly they can be returned, the better in terms of kennel space.

For those who do need to be rehomed, the fostering scheme is ideal.

Mr Levy from the Dog's Trust said: "Fostering is an excellent idea – it means there's a greater capacity for looking after dogs looking for homes.

"With kennels, once the kennels are full they are full."

The dogs are not the only ones who benefit from foster care, either.

"There are many advantages for foster carers," he added.

"It's a very rewarding thing to do, and that's the main part of it.

"There are so many health benefits, for example the simple benefits of the daily exercise of walking a dog every day, getting out of the house and getting a daily stroll – that's the most obvious one.

"There are the psychological benefits, such as the relationship between you and the dog, and the companionship."

Taking our canine friends out of the kennel environment is also a positive step.

Mr Levy explained: "One thing that's worth bearing in mind is that as nice as kennels can be, they can be the best kennels in the world, and can still be a very stressful place for some dogs.

"A home environment is going to benefit lots of dogs, not only the dogs being fostered, but also the dogs in the kennels who have more space and attention.

"At the Dogs Trust we do a lot with our dogs – we get them out two or three times a day, doing training and playing with them, but they do spend a lot of time in their kennels.

"Most dogs love human interaction, and they are going to get a lot more of it in a home than in a kennel environment."

Foster-owner Ms Christison added: "Butch loved his time here and I loved having him and I can't wait to foster another dog.

"It's a wonderful scheme and I would urge anyone who loves dogs to consider it."

Peter Hicks, Medway Council portfolio holder for community safety, said: "We hope our new initiative will provide a better future for dogs who, through no fault of their own, have found themselves on the streets.

"And it is vital owners get their pets microchipped.

"Microchipping will be compulsory from 2016, but we can provide this service, free and now, in the comfort of your home."

■ **For more information on fostering a dog, visit www.medway.gov.uk and visit the environmental page.**

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Rescheduled timetable to bring good and bad news for City-bound train users

£6.5bn transformation of London Bridge station will cause disruption to thousands of commuters but, as **Sarah Linney** reports, more high-speed services could ease some misery

RAIL commuters have been bracing themselves for years of disruption as London Bridge undergoes a multi-billion-pound refurbishment – and this week they got their first glimpse at just what it would mean to the timetable.

Earlier than normal, train operator Southeastern unveiled its timetable for 2015 – bringing with it good and bad news for many.

The London Bridge transformation is one of the biggest changes to services in a generation: a three-year, £6.5 billion refurbishment from January that will enhance its capacity and allow it to accommodate longer trains coming from Kent.

However, it will be closed to a large number of services from the county for long spells during the improvements. And that means a headache for those who frequently change at the terminal.

But the good news is that high-speed services are increasing, with several stations on the east Kent coast getting high-speed trains for the first time and Ashford now having four an hour in peak times.

The work at London Bridge will affect passengers on services to and from Charing Cross and Cannon Street – with both routes being modified.

For the first half of the work – from January 2015 until August 2016 – trains to Charing Cross will not be able to stop at London Bridge as the platforms they use will be undergoing refurbishment.

As a consequence, passengers needing access to London Bridge will have to catch a Cannon Street service instead.

There is also, of course, the option of getting off at a different London station – St Pancras, Charing Cross, Waterloo or Victoria – to walk to wherever you need to be or get a bus or the underground.

And when in August 2016 Charing Cross trains start stopping there again, Cannon Street services will then stop while the work continues.

To avoid total chaos at Cannon Street, which will be taking a large number of extra trains, some existing trains to both Charing Cross and Cannon Street will be diverted to London Blackfriars instead, which is about a 10-minute walk from London Bridge.

Cannon Street main and underground stations will also be open for much longer – from 5am to 1am.

Southeastern's train services director, Richard Dean, confirmed that season-ticket-holders who had to make changes to their journey because of the work – such as using the high-speed trains or the underground – would not be charged extra.

"The rebuilding of London Bridge means very significant changes to our train service," he said.

"A lot of people are going to be affected. It's a lot of upheaval.

"For us the priority is making sure we can get all our trains into London. We are trying to keep the same number of trains running.

"The engineers would have preferred us to shut the station. This is a balance between the best solution for our passengers and the best solution for the project."

The new timetable is available on the Southeastern website and Mr Dean is encouraging people to take a look.

"Many people will find there isn't an impact on them," he said.

"Most of the east Kent lines will continue to go to Charing Cross as they do now – and in peak times those trains don't tend to stop at London Bridge anyway. In Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells there will be more of an impact.

"If you are travelling to London Bridge to walk to work from there, you will need to go to Cannon Street. If you are going to London Bridge to use the underground, there will be different ways of making your journey."



FINAL DESTINATION: Work will affect passengers on services to and from Charing Cross and Cannon Street

> **"Many will find there isn't an impact on them. We are getting a fantastic new station at London Bridge, but between times we have to through this pain"**
>
> **Richard Dean,** Southeastern's train services director



But he was keen to stress the benefits of the redevelopment and accompanying timetable changes.

The plan is not merely to rebuild London Bridge but to run far more trains from there to Gatwick, Cambridge, King's Lynn, Peterborough, Brighton, the south coast and numerous other destinations.

"This is about managing a major enhancement to the railway network. We are going to get a fantastic new station at London Bridge, but between times we have to go through this pain," Mr Dean said.

"The timetable has been planned to be robust and perform better than today's timetable. We are trying to make things better despite the challenges we have got and build some enhancements to the existing services on the back of this work."

The benefits include a new hourly high-speed service for Deal, Walmer, Sandwich, Martin Mill and Birchington-on-Sea.

The hourly train from St Pancras to Dover Priory, instead of stopping at Dover, will now continue to Deal, Sandwich and Ramsgate before looping back to Faversham, where it will join the existing north Kent line going to St Pancras.

The same will happen in the opposite direction; every other high-speed Faversham train will not terminate at Faversham but go through Thanet and Deal to Dover to join the existing Dover train coming back to London.

This means the smaller coastal stations will now have two trains an hour to London: one to Charing Cross via Dover, and one to St Pancras via Faversham.

The hourly service between Margate and St Pancras, via Canterbury West, will not be part of the extended loop, but because of the demand for the service it will now have 12 coaches instead of six at peak times.

And instead of the trains from Canterbury and Dover joining together at Ashford, at peak times they will run separately all the way, giving Ashford four trains an hour at peak times instead of two.

"I have seen peak-time trains where people are finding it quite difficult to get seats, which shows how popular the service is," Mr Dean said.

There will also be a high-speed service for Snodland, which will now be a stop on the Maidstone West to St Pancras line, as well as an extra peak-time train from Maidstone East to Blackfriars.

Maidstone and Canterbury will be linked by an hourly direct train, with the extension of the half-hourly London Victoria to Ashford service – every other train will run on to Canterbury.

There will also be two direct trains from Sheerness to London Victoria in the morning, and two back in the evening – an extension of the Gillingham-Victoria service.

Dervish Mertcan, from Passenger Focus, said: "There are always winners and losers when timetables change, but this redevelopment is absolutely necessary.

"Many passengers will benefit in the long term from the improved station and increased capacity, which should reduce overcrowding."

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BATTLE: Airport owner Ann Gloag and council leader Iris Johnston



Compulsory purchase of airport is still an option as talks with owner stall

Thanet councillors to meet on Thursday on whether to step in and wrench control of Manston from millionaire owner Ann Gloag. By **Maria Chiorando**

COUNCIL chiefs will decide on Thursday whether to push ahead with controversial plans to serve a compulsory purchase order on Manston Airport to prise it from the grasp of millionaire business woman Ann Gloag.

Mrs Gloag met Iris Johnston, the Labour leader of Thanet District Council, in London on Thursday afternoon for a 90-minute meeting – described by Mrs Johnston as "extremely disappointing".

Mrs Gloag bought Manston last October in a deal worth £1. She had hoped to strike deals for commercial flights with Ryanair and for freight with British Airways, only for both to fall through.

Claiming she was unable to see a route to turning the business around in the mid-term, and claiming it was losing up to £12,000 a day, she announced it was to close, with the loss of some 150 jobs.

To the infuriation of pro-airport campaigners, she rejected a number of offers to buy the site made by US investment firm RiverOak – including one for the £7 million asking price just hours before it closed.

It has led many to be apprehensive as to what Mrs Gloag intends to do with the site, amid fears it could be sold for housing.

A compulsory purchase order (CPO) would see the local authority exercise powers to acquire land for the good of the community if it can meet certain conditions.

However, it would mean committing millions of public funds to a venture that continues to prove to be economically unviable.

The council has sought extensive legal advice on the matter and will need to have a water-tight deal in place with a commercial backer the moment it carries out the purchase – a purchase that it seems likely Mrs Gloag would fight.

Certainly there appeared little hope of any breakthrough after the meeting on Thursday.

Emerging from the discussion – much of which was subject to confidentiality agreements – the Thanet council leader said: "We discussed the situation in considerable depth.

"I am extremely disappointed to say that her position remains unchanged.

"A motion to discuss the compulsory purchase of the airport is tabled for the full council meeting on July 10 and we will discuss both this and the substantial petition received on this matter."

A petition with around 8,000 signatures from airport campaigners will be presented at Thursday's council meeting.

Conservative Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale said of the CPO proposal: "The inquiry that a CPO will almost certainly generate will additionally offer the chance to get the facts on the record and to expose the manner in which potential business opportunities have been squandered."

The talks came after a particularly grim week for Manston supporters, after details emerged that Ms Gloag was auctioning the airport's assets.

The entire contents of the airport will be sold in an online sale organised by auctioneer Peaker Pattinson, held over July 30-31.

It will also give potential buyers the chance for what could be a final look at the airport, with would-be bidders given the chance to see the items in-situ at organised viewings between July 23 and 29.

Items up for grabs include games, perfume and books from the duty-free shop.

Also included are runway vehicles, baggage conveyor belts and trolleys, x-ray machines and check-in desks.

Cllr Johnston told KoS: "When we were told there was going to be an orderly closure of the airport, I was surprised to see the extent of the auction.

"My understanding was that Mrs Gloag was going to donate a lot of it to charity, but I see that the sale is right down to perfumes in the shop."

Sir Roger claimed that the auction "underscores Mrs Gloag's attitude towards Manston and her contempt for public opinion".

He does, however, continue to remain positive about the airport's future.

He said: "This will simply strengthen the determination of Manston's supporters, the district council, members of parliament and, of course, the prospective purchasers, to buy the airfield and to get planes flying again.

"Much of what is on sale is past its best and any new operator would be looking to replace and refresh equipment more suited to the tasks generated by the new business that Manston will attract."

RiverOak, which says it remains interested in acquiring the site, has already stressed if it were able to move on the site it would look to turn it into a freight hub.

Before this can happen, though, there are fears that the site will be further decimated.

The council is worried that the runway and buildings will be demolished in order to reduce the business rates, although this demolition would require planning permission.

Cllr Johnston explains: "Some weeks ago, nearby residents raised concerns about heavy machinery going to the airport, and police very kindly went to see if it was secure."

Time is running out for the airfield, and supporters will be anxiously awaiting the outcome of next week's council meeting.

KoS was unable to reach Mrs Gloag for a comment.

■ **What do you think of Manston? Share your views and join the debate. Write to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

MANSTON... WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

FOLLOWING lobbying by Thanet MPs Sir Roger Gale and Laura Sandys, the transport select committee has announced an inquiry into smaller airports with a particular focus on Manston.

The inquiry will explore the role of Manston Airport and its place in the UK aviation market.

The committee may collect evidence from a number of sources, including Thanet District Council, Kent County Council and the current owner of the site. It provides the fascinating potential of Mrs Gloag being called to give evidence.

The timetable for the inquiry has not yet been set but is now likely to commence after the summer recess.

Tory MPs Sir Roger and Mrs Sandys said: ''We are very pleased our colleagues have listened to our concerns and will be holding this very necessary inquiry.

''We both remain convinced that Manston Airport has an important contribution to make to the future of the UK freight and passenger market and our expectation is that this inquiry will justify that belief.

''Though the fight for compulsory purchase continues locally, the more we can do to get Westminster and Whitehall thinking about Manston the better, and this powerful select committee inquiry is an important part of our efforts to boost it up the national agenda.

''To that end also we met, at the start of the week, with Sir Howard Davies, whose commission is conducting a separate inquiry into runway capacity in the south east.

''That meeting was constructive and productive and we believe that Sir Howard's observations will provide important input into both the select committee inquiry and any public inquiry that may follow the imposition of a CPO by Thanet District Council.''



IT'S NO JOKE: After 14 years, and countless rows, work is finally to begin on bringing down the site of Tunbridge Wells's former cinema in the town's centre

Curtain is finally to fall on long-running cinema saga as demolition work begins

HEARD the one about Tunbridge Wells's long-abandoned cinema being demolished? It's a joke that no longer raises a smile among fed-up locals.

But this week, after years of inaction, work finally began to demolish it.

The once much-loved site, right in the very centre of the royal spa town, closed for the final time in 2000, when operator Odeon opted instead to build a multiplex cinema on the outskirts of the borough.

It slapped a covenant on the site, preventing it from being reopened as a movie house, and for the last 14 years it has become the most contentious issue in the town.

Developers with big plans have come and gone as the recession scuppered schemes, but now something, finally, seems to be happening.

Bulldozers may not have quite moved in yet, but work to get to that stage is under way.

Tunbridge Borough Council is keeping a close eye on the situation – convenient as the site is, opposite the authority's imposing headquarters – with a spokesman saying they too are waiting to see what happens.

The decision to level the dilapidated site has come from the current owners, a joint venture between The Carlyle Group and Bellhouse Joseph Holding.

They have a supermarket tenant in place, ready to move in, but had said the building would only be pulled down as and when a tenancy contract was signed and sealed.

The council objected, along with a wave of anger from residents who want to see the eyesore brought down.

Yet even that has proved to be a protracted process.

There were reports Waitrose was ready to sign for the building after almost three years of talks, but within months, due to changes in the economy, the company is said to have asked for new terms on the rent.

> **"At the moment the vast majority of the work is taking place away from public view, at all times striving to keep any disruption to a minimum"**
>
> **Ben Du Boulay,** of The Carlyle Group, the cinema site's owners

A Waitrose spokesman said: "It is no secret we have a long-standing ambition to open in Tunbridge Wells and that absolutely remains the case.

"We have been exploring the possibility of us opening a store with Bellhouse Joseph Holdings but have sadly not been able to agree a viable proposal, despite the best intention of everyone involved.

"We are as keen as ever to open in the town so this is not down to the location, but rather the property elements that can influence the viability of a scheme such as scheme costs, parking, layout and the challenging market conditions retailers face. "

In July last year, asbestos in the building was slowly removed over a 10-week period.

The owners drew up a timetable of demolition, which has now finally got under way, helped along by the council serving what's called a Section 215 notice ordering demolition to be finished by September.

It's believed that deadline has been negotiated back to October for it to all be finished. That, and the threat the council would take on its own contractors and then bill the owners.

Ben Du Boulay of The Carlyle Group, the site's owner, said: "I'm pleased to confirm preliminary demolition work has now started.

"At the moment the vast majority of the work is taking place away from public view and at all times we are striving to keep any disruption to the public and neighbouring businesses to a minimum."

Ed Bellhouse, of developer Bellhouse Joseph, said: "This week the contractors have been concentrating on closing off public access points and making the necessary preparations to the rear of the site so that demolition work can commence in earnest as soon as possible.

"We haven't finalised what the eventual scheme will be as yet."

It could yet contain at least some residential, and ironically even a boutique cinema has been mentioned.

As for the building's final death knell, things should move at a faster pace on July 14 when 'soft stripping' [removal of the internal fitting] begins. Scaffolding goes up around a week later and the demolition process begins, bringing an end to an issue that to the town's people was no laughing matter.

Mystery runs deep into cause of spring's dry spell



NO WATER: Chalybeate Sping in Tunbridge Wells is 400 years old

MYSTERY continues to surround just why Tunbridge Wells's famous spring has run dry.

The Chalybeate Spring, which gives the town its name, remains a hugely popular tourist attraction with its legendary healing and reviving qualities.

But 10 days ago the water stopped running, forcing the council to pull the plug on employing 'dippers' – people who spoon cups of the water to tourists while discussing the spring's history.

The spring appears on the Pantiles, the town's historic Georgian shopping parade.

It believed this is the first time it run dry in its 400-year history.

In the past it has been down to a trickle, but once the skies opened the waters started to flow once more.

This time, however, it seems to have completley stopped.

Pantiles owner TargetFollow is still looking into the problem as a matter of urgency.

According to Tunbridge Borough Council there has not been any noticeable drop in visitors.

Cllr Jane March, cabinet member with responsibility for tourism, said: "Obviously it's a great pity visitors can't see the water in the spring, but I have every confidence that council officers and Targetfollow will do all they can to rectify the situation.

"I am very happy to confirm that it's business as usual in Tunbridge Wells. The town is very busy, we have lots of visitors and local accommodation is in high demand."

In 2010, the drinking of the spring water was halted for a short while when low levels of bacteria were detected, once again caused by low water levels.

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Speeding school drivers taken to task by the pupils they put at risk

Police let students confront the motorists travelling too fast outside their school, writes **Sarah Linney**

SPEEDING drivers outside a school found the brakes applied in emotive fashion this week when they were confronted by the children whose lives they put at risk.

As part of an initiative to highlight the dangers of driving too fast, youngsters at St Mary's School in Dover joined forces with police to come face to face with those breaking the limit.

Among the questions the pupils asked was 'How would you feel if you ran me over because you were speeding?'.

Motorists clocked travelling too fast were given a stark choice – either face prosecution or meet the children.

The questions began, mildly enough, with 'Why were you speeding?', but the children then hauled the offenders over the moral coals with questions like 'Do you think your reason for speeding is more important than my life?'.

'How would you feel if my life was cut short because you were speeding?', 'how would you feel if your child was run over and killed by a speeding driver?' and 'how would your family feel if they found out that you had been killed because you were driving too fast?'.

Organiser PCSO Chris Chapman, who has run similar schemes in Blean, Chartham and Barham, said he believed the conversations with the children were far more of a deterrent than the standard penalty of a £60 fine and three points on the driver's licence.

He explained: "I believe the effects are more powerful – it is coming straight from the mouths of those who are most vulnerable to it. If I was a motorist, and you gave me three points and fined me £60, it's going to upset me for a little bit, and then I'm going to put my foot down again.

"As a parent, I would say speaking to the children would be more likely to make me slow down. I could ask the drivers those questions myself, but it wouldn't be as powerful.

"The message is that speeding drivers need to slow down because they could hurt someone. We all have families and we all want to go home to those families."

The scheme took place over a two-hour period on Monday.

In total, 12 drivers were stopped for exceeding the speed limit – 11 of them were men. The speed limit outside the school is 30mph.

Three were driving so fast – at 45mph, 46mph and 51mph – that they had no option but to be either fined or taken to court. One driver also had their car seized because they were not insured.

The remaining nine, who had all been doing 33mph or more, took the option of speaking to the children rather than being penalised.

"The kids behaved impeccably. They were all a little excited at the beginning to see us turn up in high-visibility vests," Mr Chapman said.

"But the drivers all spoke quite positively about the exercise. They said it was powerful hearing it straight from the children.

"A couple of them were taxi-drivers who had passengers on board, and they agreed to finish those journeys and come back afterwards to speak to the children."

The 32 Year 6 pupils who took part worked on a wider project on speeding with their teacher Rebecca Twinn, learning about its dangers from police, doing their own research and making posters to hand out to the drivers.

Although the school's main entrance is in Laureston Place, it is outside the back entrance in Maison Dieu Road, along which many pupils walk to school, that speeding is a real problem and it is here that the drivers were stopped.

"It's quite a wide road, and motorists don't really realise that it's a built-up area and they are driving that close to a school," head-teacher Helen D'Cruz explained.

"Most people are in a hurry and don't really think about their speed. So this is important in raising awareness because it could have disastrous consequences.

"It is a brilliant project. A lot of motorists said it had really hit home. One of them had a nine-year-old child and he said it made him think."

She said the project had benefited the children as well as the drivers.

"It was a really good exercise in citizenship – in showing them that this is their town and we are all responsible for it," Mrs D'Cruz said.

"The children will be driving in a few years, so hopefully they will have the message about speeding from very early on.

"They all thought it was really good and enjoyed the responsibility of doing it. Two of the boys said they felt bad asking the questions."

Mr Chapman says he now wants other schools from Dover to take part this year and next.

"It's something that we can do as many times as we need to, to get the message across," he added.

"It is a high-visibility operation and when we have done it before it has reduced speeding, and complaints about speeding, for a month or two – although nothing is permanent.

"The children will learn from this that they have to be careful and we will be continuing their road-safety education.

"Those kids will also now feel confident that when their parents are speeding, they can ask them to slow down. That's another lasting effect of this, another group we have got to."

TOP 10 WAYS TO AVOID SPEEDING:

- ✓ **Check your speedometer regularly, especially when leaving high-speed roads**
- ✓ **Know the limits – look for signs, especially at junctions**
- ✓ **Assume lamp posts mean 30mph, until signs say otherwise, but remember it could be 20mph**
- ✓ **Remember, speed limits are a maximum, not a target**
- ✓ **20mph is plenty when kids are about – and may even be too fast**
- ✓ **Try no higher than third gear in a 30mph limit**
- ✓ **Recognise what makes you speed – keeping up with traffic, overtaking or being tailgated**
- ✓ **Concentrate – distracted drivers speed**
- ✓ **Slow down when entering villages**
- ✓ **Give yourself time – there's no need to speed and you won't get there quicker**

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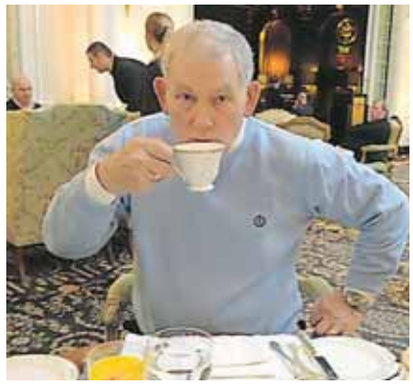
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Remarkable rags to riches tale of man who emerged from criminal underworld. **Chris Murphy** reports







LEGEND: John Rogers with daughter Marion, was a fighter and a loving father and successful businessman, who fought both Parkinson's and cancer

How Krays' safe-blower built himself a legitimate success

HE DESCRIBED himself as a modern-day Oliver Twist and would go on to work for notorious London gangsters the Kray twins and meet on-the-run Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs in Brazil.

But for all the difficult challenges John Rogers faced, he managed to turn his back on a life of crime to set up and create a hugely successful legitimate business.

He was finally beaten by the double-whammy of Parkinson's disease and cancer last September.

Yet Mr Roger's remarkable story and transformation has inspired his daughter to publish his memoirs, charting a life from the suburbs of Maidstone to the mean streets of east London.

Marion Rogers, who is behind the book, A Fighter All the Way, said: "He was a true fighter and even when he was diagnosed with Parkinson's he didn't stop fighting, right up until his death from prostate cancer."

John Rogers was born in Bearsted, in 1943, during the Second World War.

Unwanted by his parents, he found himself passing his way through the county's children's homes before serving in the military.

Calling himself a modern-day Oliver Twist, he was in and out windows stealing before moving on to a career of safe blowing and working for the notorious Kray twins, Ronnie and Reggie.

In his early life, Mr Rogers used fear to get his way, writing: "The Krays' philosophy is true. When people are scared of you, you can do pretty much anything. Never show fear even if you are dying inside."

After time spent in prison, he turned his back on Britain's criminal underbelly, and relocated to Cornwall in 1984, setting up JR Flat Roofing with a £2,000 bank loan.

The book is written in Mr Rogers' own forthright style which includes melancholic moments alongside amusing antics – such as meeting Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs in Rio, Brazil, in 1990, when he won a charity competition.

His daughter, Marion Rogers, who took over the running of the family business along with her brothers Nick and Phil, put the finishing touches to the book after her father died, aged 70.

She said: "The book was a pleasure to work on with my dad.

"He has some audacious stories which he tells in an unabashed way, but also opens up about his sadder times – especially feeling unwanted as a child in Kent.

"It goes on to tell how he built a record of public service becoming a pillar of the local community, even receiving the prestigious title of president of the Redruth Chamber of Commerce."

In the book, Mr Rogers writes of his early brushes with authority.

"I'll bet you none of those 'experts' ever dreamed I would end up launching a business which... was the foundation for a highly successful nationwide operator that is still thriving today... none of them could have imagined that one day I would be looking back on a life that included a record of public service, not once but thrice over!" he wrote.

Mr Rogers was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 1994, but typically kept fighting.

He wrote: "You just might conclude that I am something of a living, walking miracle – in which case I won't argue with you.

"If not exactly fighting fit any more, I'm still 'fighting' – as I always have done, in various ways, almost from the day I was born.

"I am proud of what I have achieved in this life, after the world and his wife had seemed to be against me."

Marion said she knew her father was a villain when she was quite young – it was never a family secret.

But neither was their determination to leave his past behind.

She said: "I am biased as he was my dad, but there is one word that describes what he was – and that's legend.

"He wasn't your average guy on the street – he was a loveable rogue with a heart of gold.

"A face that fitted anywhere, he was just as comfortable in a transport café as he was The Savoy and everyone that knew him loved him.

"He didn't judge people by what they had, he saw the beauty in everyone and that made him into the special person that he was.

"This may seem hard to believe when you think of the life he led before meeting mum."

His early life was always destined to become one of crime.

Marion added: "In his younger days he worked for the Kray twins and no doubt that involved a lot of violence as well as blowing safes for them.

"As I was growing up, however, that never crossed my mind.

"We all just sort of knew he had a criminal history but he was a very mild tempered and helpful man that would do anything for anyone.

"He didn't like to see anyone being picked on and wouldn't just walk on by if he witnessed a fight that he thought was unfair. He would either break it up or tackle the bully himself.

"So to me, my dad was a hero. He rarely talked about this part of his criminal past; he was old school and he took most of this part of his life to the grave with him along with his time as a 2 Para [Second Battalion, Parachute Regiment].

"He did, however, take great pleasure in telling stories about the fights he had over the years which had earned him the nickname 'Tiger'.

"A lot of these stories are in his book.

"I knew of his criminal past but I did not know how many prison sentences he had served until we had to run a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check on the staff at JR Flat Roofing.

"Dad's criminal record came back five pages long... that was a surprise.

"I also found this amusing as it included three prison terms for fighting or stealing he had never mentioned.

"Dad, however, found it embarrassing and wasn't happy when I laughed. He told me he was not particularly proud of the record, but it had made him in to the person he was.

"Nothing in Dad's life was easy. Being placed in a borstal in North London as a teenager following a childhood in homes in Kent; he was all alone in the world.

"He did what he could to survive and I am proud that he came out the other end the doting husband and loving father, despite his history.

"The fact that nearly 400 people attended his funeral is evidence enough of how much he was loved.

"His strong character made my brothers and I what we are today, he taught us that we should never fear anything, we should take risks and we should work for what we believe in, I will always miss him."

In his younger days he worked for the Kray twins and no doubt that involved a lot of violence as well as blowing safes for them

Marion Rogers, daughter of John Rogers – A Fighter All The Way

■ **The book is available to download through Amazon at £1.93 with 10p from every sale donated to Help For Heroes.**



Fears prison pressure is putting us at risk amid a number of absconders

Chris Murphy takes a look at concerns at a Sheppey jail after another two inmates go on the run from open jail prompting warning from officer

AFTER a flurry of absconds from an open prison on the Isle of Sheppey, there is a warning of more to come unless something is changed.

In recent weeks, three prisoners have failed to return from work placements at HMP Standford Hill.

One, Michael Wheatley, known as the Skull Cracker for his violent assaults during armed robberies, was back committing violent crime within days of escaping on May 5.

The 55-year-old was caught after five days on the run, and has since been jailed for a minimum of 10 years for robbing a Chelsea Building Society in Surrey.

This week, two more prisoners absconded from the prison.

Scott Callaghan, 35, was serving time for perverting the course of justice, and Billy Harkins, 29. for aggravated burglary.

As an open prison – used normally to house low-risk criminals or those reaching the final stages of a long sentence – Sheppey's Standford Hill is no stranger to inmates taking advantage of the relaxed security.

Designed to allow convicts the chance to integrate back into society, prisoners are allowed home visits and work placements – on condition they return to the jail.

They are Category D inmates: those with any sentence, a maximum of five years to release and a maximum of two years to parole eligibility date.

Inside there are extensive education facilities with Ofsted inspections, along with hobby kits during lock-up, in-cell power, own bedding, own clothes, a PlayStation with no internet access and television at £1 per week.

Sports and workshop facilities are also available to inmates who are paid up to £14.50 a week.

The last Ministry of Justice report on the prison showed excellent results with inmates doing almost 40 hours a week of "purposeful activity".

Last budget figures in the year ending 2012 showed it cost just over £50 million a year to run, an average of £37,000 per prisoner.

But the jail's problems run deep, says Mike Rolfe from the Prisoner Officers' Association.

He told KoS that because governments have been shutting down closed prisons, the pressure is on management of jails across the UK to speed-up releases. And that means very often, unsuitable prisoners are fast-tracked to open jails, where they simply are not ready to cope and abscond.

Mr Rolfe said: "They are sending the wrong prisoners to places like Standford Hill because they are in desperate need for space.

"Bear in mind, the Government has closed 16 establishments during their tenure."

Prisons in Ashwell, Brockhill, Blundeston, Bullwood Hall, Camp Hill, Canterbury, Dorchester, Gloucester, Kingston, Lancaster Castle, Latchmere House, Northallerton, Reading, Shepton Mallet, Shrewsbury, and Wellingborough have all been closed since May 2010.

> **"A lot of closed establishments, like Elmley on Sheppey, will be sending inmates to Standford Hill who, five years ago, would never have made it there"**
>
> **Mike Rolfe,** Prisoner Officers' Association

Mr Rolfe said: "Now there is a real pressure to fill up open prisons with people that are not suitable.

"So a lot of closed establishments, like Elmley on Sheppey, will be sending inmates to Standford Hill who, four or five years ago, would never have made it there, because of their risk factor. That really is the crux of the problem."

More worryingly, Mr Rolfe said the public should be deeply concerned about this new trend.

He said: "I think they should be worried, yes. There is a risk there. I don't want to panic the public, but there is undue pressure on places like Standford Hill.

"They are sending people up there who do pose a serious risk to the public should they return to their offending behaviour. Absconding has always gone on, but that risk is now elevated.

"The answer is more prisons, unfortunately. There is over-crowding and a desperate shortage of staff to control those prisoners. The courts are still sending people to prisons of course so it really is becoming a pressure pot.

"And that is leading to a noticeable increase in absconds.

"Open prisons like Standford Hill are taking inmates who haven't been properly tested through the system. They are reaching Category D status much, much quicker these days.

"There are queries as to whether they have addressed their drug problems. Some haven't been tested for a long time and yet have had a history of problems.

"It seems they are being taken at their word that they have no issues. It is a messy situation.

"There is even a problem with accommodation with prisoners damaging it so it can't be used, so that adds even more pressure on closed prisons to move inmates on faster."

Increasing security at Standford Hill won't help, he said. Putting up high fences and walls would have a negligible effect, as many abscond while on work placements or home visits.

And stopping those won't be fair on the prisoners who are legitimately at Standford Hill and are cooperating perfectly with their rehabilitation.

Mr Rolfe said: "What would help would be to tighten up on security that is already there, by stopping prisoners sneaking in alcohol, drugs and other illicit items, and these are assisting their poor behaviour and possibly lead to them committing more crimes while outside and even absconding."

The Ministry of Justice puts in place the Independent Monitoring Board for prisons.

The latest report on Standford Hill in 2013 notes: "We are happy to report that, despite changes brought about locally buy the closure of HMP Canterbury and re-designation of the role of HMP Maidstone, the senior management team of Standford Hill has largely remained in place.

"Over the year there has been a noticeable change in the calibre of prisoners received by Standford Hill; far more ISPP (Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection) and life sentence prisoners have become resident.

"Never-the-less the atmosphere of the prison remains calm and a respectful relationship between offenders and officers has been maintained and this might be seen to account for a rate of absconds throughout the year which regularly falls below 50 per cent of the allocated target. The board continue to feel that the prison is well run and is moving forward.

"Reducing standing levels have lessened the frequency of routine checks, never-the-less, intelligence reports have proved useful in enabling successful checks to be carried out."







ON THE RUN: Billy Harkins, 29 (pictured left), and Scott Callaghan, aged 35 (right), absconded from the Isle of Sheppey's HMP Stanford Hill this week

KEA

Standford Hill: The last stage in rehabilitation or an escape route?

AS an open prison, there are no high walls or miles of razor wire on top of giant fences.

It is effectively the last stage many inmates have to go through before being released.

Situated on the site of a former Royal Air Force station, Stanford Hill was first used as a jail in 1950.

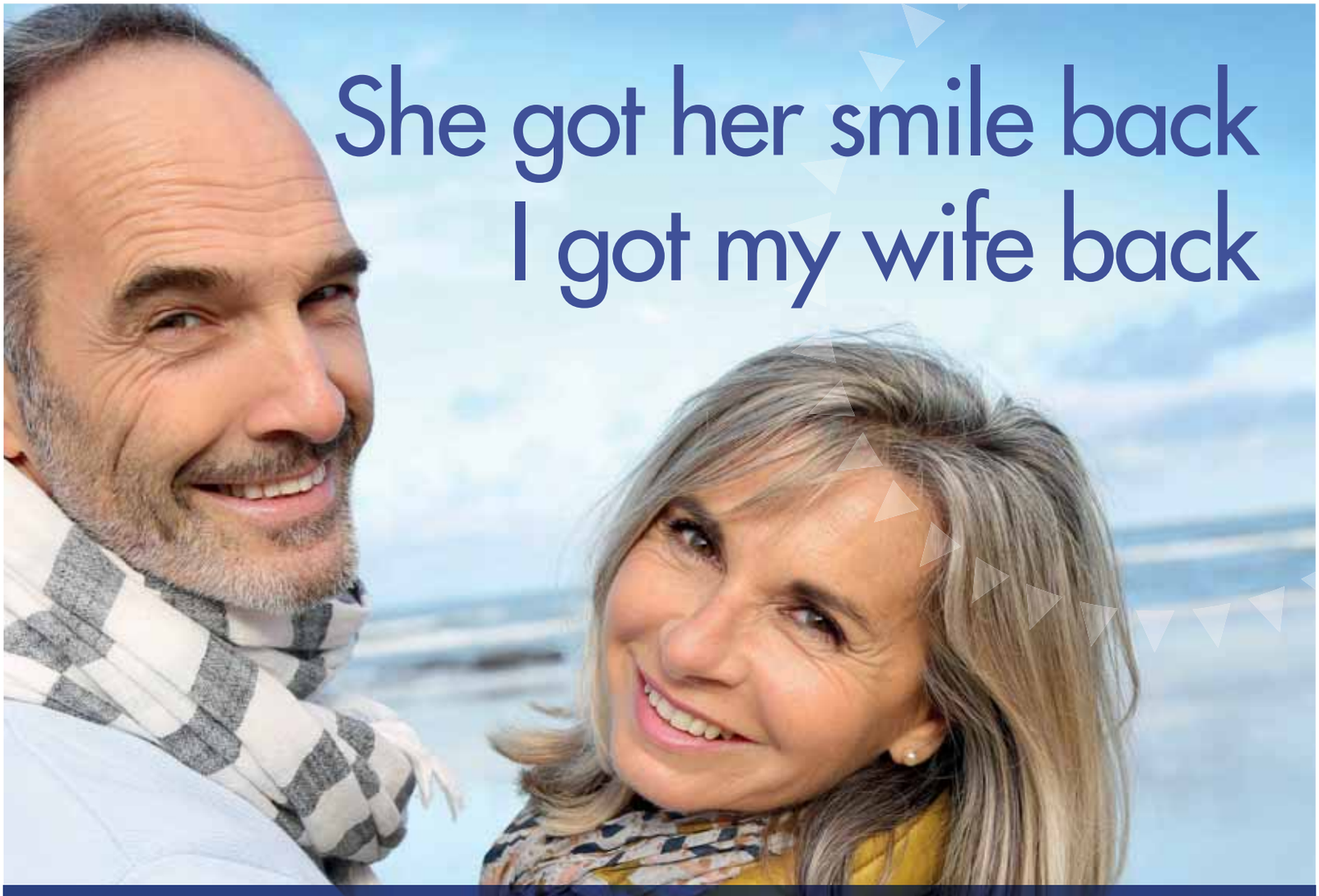
Since then it has undergone modernisation, and was effectively rebuilt in 1986.

It now holds 464 Category D sentenced male adults.

The justice department said: ''The main prison focus is for prisoners to work out in the community, carrying out reparative work or engaging in paid employment towards the end of their sentence.

''Within the establishment there is an education department offering a full range of learning and numerous vocational training opportunities.

''Much of the employment throughout the prison involves peer advisors and embeds learning where ever possible.''



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GARRET: Peter Oetzmann has an intriguing past career, having lived and worked in Mongolia for three years before returning to Folkestone

Picture perfect for artist with Mongol connection



Trained in Kent, Folkestone-based portrait photographer Peter Oetzmann's former hunting ground was Mongolia. He tells **Diana Crampton** all about his work.

Peter Oetzmann has an intriguing past career, having lived and worked in Mongolia for three years before returning to the UK to settle in Folkestone's Creative Quarter.

It is here that I interviewed him, in an almost archetypical garret at the top of the B&B Gallery on Tontine Street.

The first work of Peter's I saw was mixed media with large canvases and photographs, but his principal interest lies in photography, which he studied formally to MA level at KIAD in Rochester (now the University for the Creative Arts).

Unsurprisingly, when I asked if formal training was necessary he was positive about it.

"I think it helps you understand why you do things and it increases your knowledge of other work – a period of time where you sit down and look at images."

That education definitely stood him in good stead when living in Mongolia, where he worked as an agency freelance photographer.

He said: "I had my own darkroom and when you get your image used by the New York Times as its 'image of the day' and you know it took just a few hours for the image to travel, it is quite an amazing feeling."

Of Mongolia, he said: "Much of

Continued on page 45 »

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« Continued from page 43

the work was culturally interesting, while the news was depressing. People used my images to illustrate other stories."

Indeed, at another of Peter's exhibitions I've seen, there were pictures straight out of the pages of the National Geographic: his signature art photographic portraits.

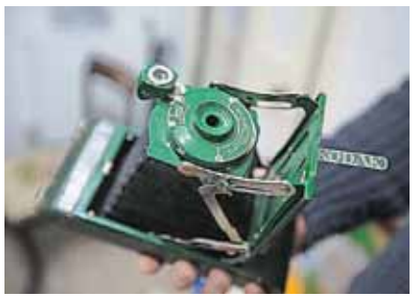
This is Peter's preferred genre and medium. The portraits are always taken within the context of a home, so they are not conventional full-face portraits with dark backdrops, rather works that allow the background to enhance the story.

He has succumbed to the fascination with film. "It's tactile. I can't lose it – but I can still get it mixed up and out of order! Making the print is what holds my attention – that's what I enjoy."

"There's a great deal of trust in going up to a stranger and asking if you can photograph them..."

On the commercial possibilities of art photography, he said: "You know what sells. There are ways you can make money out of taking photographs, but I do what I do because it is what I love: looking at something and then taking the picture, then the adjustments and tinkling. There's also a slight playfulness to photography, which people buy into."







FRAMED: A classic Peter Oetzmann portrait, top, and in his studio, above



He cites Dayanita Singh, who recently exhibited at the Hayward Gallery, as an inspiration in the way she charts different aspects of Indian culture.

So do people respond to his love of photography? "I hope so. Martine Franck, Magnum photographer and second wife of Henri Cartier Bresson, told me she liked my work – that'll do me for life!"

How does Oetzmann start new projects?

"There's a lot of pondering. I have always been a portrait photographer, which many find hard, others easy.

"I'm somewhere in the middle. I'm not interested in taking pictures of people who are not compliant.

"There's a great deal of trust in going up to a stranger and asking if you can photograph them. It's surprising how many people say yes."

One of his big projects was the Picture This exhibition, which took place all over the UK. He was working in Bolton, where about 80 per cent of people agreed to be photographed.

"People are so image-conscious, but if you ask them if you can take their photo, they're up for it," he said.

Oetzmann's advice for art students is sage: "When you're young you only have to worry about yourself and that's the time you need to go and spend most of your time doing something artistic. If you go below 50 per cent, you've had it."



This feature is one of the articles that can be enjoyed in **July's Kent Life**, which is out now. Or you can subscribe online @ **subscriptionsave.co.uk** or **www.buymag.co.uk/KE**

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Win VIP tickets to Leeds Castle classical concert

Overnight accommodation at Leeds Castle, seated tickets and a delicious picnic hamper are all up for grabs





THIS month sees the return of the sensational Open Air Classical Concert at Leeds Castle – and we have teamed up with the organisers to give Kent on Sunday readers the opportunity of winning an exclusive VIP package.

This will include:

- Two seated tickets
- Overnight accommodation in a twin or double-bedded room in the Stable Courtyard at Leeds Castle, with full English breakfast
- A delicious Carluccio's hamper for two

This year's inspiring outdoor programme is hosted by BBC presenter Chris Hollins and offers a fantastic line-up of performances.

The concert features The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by John Rigby and also includes the Military Wives Choir, the Patriot Girls, international operatic tenor James Edwards, soprano Hye-Youn Lee and a local guest performance from the P&O Ferries Choir.

A number of First and Second World War songs will feature in the show to recognise the significance of 2014 as the centenary of the Great War, the 75th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the 70th anniversary of D-Day.

Aside from the 'stars' on the stage, in the skies above will be a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight show involving a Spitfire and Hurricane.

Other highlights include a military band, field guns and a stunning fireworks display ending the concert in a glorious colourful finale.

Making this prize a VIP exclusive, Leeds Castle is offering an overnight package where you will stay in the delightful Stable Courtyard bedroom, meaning you can enjoy the concert and thoroughly relax afterwards.

Set in 500 acres of beautiful parkland, Leeds Castle accommodation offers comfort and luxury, under an hour from London.

Completing your VIP treatment so you can make the most of your time in the grounds of Leeds Castle ahead of the concert, Carluccio's is providing a pre-ordered picnic hamper for two worth £45.

Classic and vegetarian options are available, so the choice is yours. Both are packed full of delicious regional Italian dishes, freshly made and presented in a sleek, reusable cool bag... all you need to do is bring the wine.

For your chance to win this fabulous VIP package, just answer this simple question:

In how many acres is Leeds Castle set?:

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To enter, text KOS followed by CONCERT and your answer, then your first name, surname address and postcode to 80058, *eg* KOS CONCERT C JOHN SMITH 2 THE STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT. Texts cost 50 pence plus your standard network rate. Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final.

Usual terms and conditions apply. Note that this is an an accessible twin or double-bedded room; the bedroom is the same style and standard as all the Stable Courtyard rooms, but the bathroom has a walk-in shower and grip-rails to make it accessible.

Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of July 9, 2014, your entry will not be valid but you still may be charged.

SMS services are provided by BBA Digital Helpline (telephone 0844 3572403). Alternatively, enter by post to Leeds Castle Competition, Archant KOS Media, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP.

The Open Air Classical Concert is on Saturday, July 12, 2014. Tickets are checked in from 3pm, with the concert site open at 4pm; the concert finishes at 10.30pm.

Leeds Castle is just off Junction 8 of the M20, Maidstone ME17 1PL.

Tickets are priced at £39 (picnic style) and £49 (seated). Parking is free from 2pm.

For more information and to buy tickets, visit www.heritage-events.co.uk or phone 0845 6526262.

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Festival ready to cater for its musical youths







GREAT VIBE: This year's LOTF has something to entertain all age groups

LOUNGE On The Farm is placing a special emphasis on youth and the family this year.

The team behind east Kent's biggest music festival has been busy working on a series of projects in the lead-up to the event, with workshops, guest speakers and a competition to perform at this year's event all lined up for the county's young people.

The festival's first Youth Slam comes in the wake of sets from top artists from the spoken-word scene including Kate Tempest and Disraeli and a diversity of open-mic slots and poetry slams.

Teaming up with the Arts Council-supported Spoke 'n' Word, LOTF is sending multi-talented Joelle Taylor into schools and colleges to encourage talented youths.

Eighteen young people from the district have already enjoyed three days of coaching in writing and performing in preparation for the Youth Poetry Slam at LOTF on Saturday, August 2.

There are two workshops remaining, with places available at:

- Arts31 at Gulbenkian – open to all aged 14-21, on Sunday, July 20.
- Canterbury Academy – open to students only, on Monday, July 21.

If you're more interested in behind-the-scenes work, meanwhile, Spoke 'n' Word has an alternative.

You can join workshops hosted by Emrys Plant, Margate poet, designer and visual artist, and LOTF's own Lucy Platel to get involved in the design, build and promotion of a festival stage.

All participants' work will be incorporated in the festival décor, with the bonus of work experience during the event.

There are two workshops, again with places still available, at:

- Canterbury Christ Church – open to all aged 14-21, on Friday and Saturday, July 25-26.

There is plenty to keep under-12s occupied as well, with Canterbury-based Wild Things giving a performance and leading a Little Lounge procession at the festival.

Wild Things were created by children's yoga teacher Sharla Attala and music teacher Jo Davis.

Working with children from St Stephen's Junior School, they are creating a fusion of art, song, djembe drumming and yoga, celebrating self-discovery and 'togetherness'.

Any junior children from St Stephen's and Blean Primary who are going to the festival can attend two free after-school workshops on Monday, July 14, and Monday, July 21, at St Stephen's, with a chance to perform with Wild Things at the event itself.

The adventures continue with Ben and Holly.

Ben Elf and Princess Holly will be bringing the magic from their Little Kingdom to the festival, with guest appearances throughout the day.

If you want to relive family camping of the past, the Little Lounge Redcoats will be on hand with some fun and summertime games for under-10s and their grown-ups.

They have all kinds of mayhem planned, including silly sports and crazy contests with a retro holiday theme. They will also be hosting a pamper night and a PJ party.

Speaking of mayhem – the world's No 1 hairless magician El Baldiniho will be performing. He'll be showing off his set of silly tricks and monkey magic for all the Little Loungers. There will be bananas!

Bezerkaz Circus offers workshop activities for all the family as well as an amazing gigantic bubble, while Kent-based Little Delights will be hosting a drama workshop with a twist. This will include games, dressing up and improvisation. Could the Little Loungers of today be The Playhouse performers of tomorrow?

The Where's Wally competition went down a storm two years ago – and so it's been brought back!

Who will be the first to find Wally?

For the under-fives, Canterbury Day Nursery will provide arts, crafts, sandpit, water fun and a toy-box filled to the brim with enough to occupy the busiest and brightest of toddlers. There will also be singing and stories from the Little Lounge mascot Penny Pigtales.

Mums and dads with babies, meanwhile, can enjoy a comfortable lounge area.

Finally, don't forget that under-12s get in to the festival for free.

To book places on the workshops, email lucy@loungeonthefarm.co.uk by Saturday, July 12. For more on the festival, visit www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk.



Dipna not getting curried away by her Brilliant book

After her father's heart attack, Indian chef **Dipna Anand** decided to create healthy alternatives to her country's many popular dishes

FOR many of us, Indian food conjures up images of a naughty but nice takeaway with all the trimmings, or a quick and calorific curry ready meal.

But chef Dipna Anand is determined to prove there are healthy ways to enjoy all your favourites, from tandoori dishes to Bombay potatoes, without sacrificing flavour.

"A lot of people think Indian food is oily and greasy, and it can't be made without a lot of butter and ghee, but that's not the case at all," said the 30-year-old, whose family has run the award-winning Brilliant Restaurant in Southall, west London, since the 70s.

"You can still make, for example, a fantastic chicken tikka masala without using the butter and oils and fats. As long as you balance the spices, that's what gives the dish its flavour and taste."

Anand was inspired to research low-fat Indian cuisine as a schoolgirl when her father, Gulu, had a wake-up call after suffering a heart attack.

"He was eating a lot of oily, greasy food, so I wanted to do something aimed at people who were controlling their weight but still loved Indian food," she said.

After landing top marks for an A-level project on the subject, the low-fat options were added to the Brilliant menu and, says Anand, "they took off".

She has now written her first cookbook, Beyond Brilliant, which features healthy dishes among its more than 40 recipes.

"Some of the recipes in the book date back 65 years – they were passed from my grandfather to my dad and now passed on to me," said Anand, whose favourite inclusion is the tandoori lamb chops.

The Brilliant restaurant has welcomed its fair share of famous faces over the years, from the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall to Sir Cliff Richard.

TV chef Gordon Ramsay also featured the eatery in his 2010 series Ramsay's Best Restaurant and spent a day learning how to cook on the clay oven.

"It's not the easiest station to work on in the kitchen – he left here with blisters on his arms but still did a fantastic job and grafted," said Anand, who insists the notoriously fiery chef wasn't at all scary.

"He's passionate and very funny as well. He was swearing at times, but when it came to work he was getting the orders out."

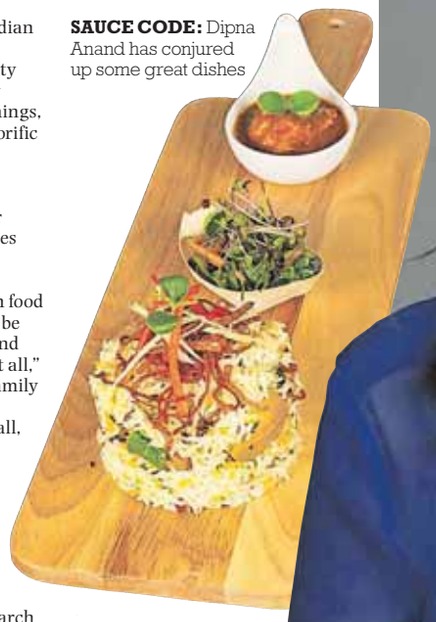
When she isn't working in the restaurant or running cookery courses, Anand plays cricket and indulges her other passion: shopping.

"I'm a compulsive shopaholic," she said. "I love shoes, handbags, shirts, earrings, bangles, jewellery... everything."

Anand's family is at the heart of what she does and there are photographs of them throughout her book.

"For the last 10 years my dad's been saying 'Dipna, you should write a book'," she said.

"There were tears in his eyes at the book launch – his dream was accomplished. Just to see that smile on his face – there can be nothing more rewarding than that."



SAUCE CODE: Dipna Anand has conjured up some great dishes



» For more food and drink articles pick up a copy of this month's KENT LIFE

Head south for the best Indian this side of the subcontinent



The Riz Restaurant

Location: Cliftonville, Margate

By **David Mairs**

THE news was broken to me by the taxi-driver as he ferried me into Margate. There was, he said, a new south Indian and Sri Lankan restaurant in town. Indeed, so keen was he to expound on an announcement that had clearly made my face light up that he diverted our route just a touch to show me where it was.

And there was no denying it – The Riz Restaurant in Northdown Road, Cliftonville, indeed proclaimed a culinary heritage that has few rivals across the world.

I'm fortunate enough to have visited Sri Lanka twice so have been familiar with its food for some time, but the only British restaurant focusing on its delights and those of nearby southern India that I had come across was in Ilford.

It was so good that I once made a special visit to Ilford to eat there... and no one goes to Ilford if they can help it. And they will do so even less now – I discovered on that ill-fated visit that the restaurant had closed.

Before that sorry event, I had tried to convince the proprietors to set up in Margate, but they deemed the town too far from the London-Essex suburbs (and let's rejoice in that!).

None of that matters now. We have The Riz and when people ask me my favourite restaurant in Thanet I invariably name this wonderful establishment first. In short, it matched – and more – my hopes for what it would be.

The gentle smell of the place that seduces you from the moment you walk through the door, the perfectly-presented layout of the tables, the immaculate standards of cleanliness, the greeting from the charming, urbane general manager Paul Singh... if you hadn't heard how blessed east Kent is in having this place, I'm telling you now. It is a gem.

Something else you must appreciate is that south Indian food differs markedly from what you might be used to in our more 'traditional' curry houses. That's part of the story here – this is not a curry house.

If this place was to satisfy my fevered expectations, it would have to set out its stall with a good dosa, a stuffed rice-pancake generally served as a starter.

Mini masala dosa it was, then, and the filling of mashed potato with mustard seeds and curry leaves might just possibly have found its way to Northdown Road from paradise. I'm getting carried away...

My main course was Karaikudi mutton curry with vegetable fried rice. Or, to put it another way, an explosion of taste... in every sense.

My companion elected to start with Malabar king prawns (chef's secret recipe) and Hyderabad chicken korma – very different, and surely better, than any other korma you will have tasted before.

We finished with mango kulfi (ice cream) and wattalaapam, a Sri Lankan dessert featuring palm sugar, coconut milk and cinnamon. All delightful, all eaten to the very last grain.

I have eulogised too much. I don't care... this place is special.

■ **The Riz Restaurant**
49 Northdown Road, Cliftonville CT9 2RN (phone 01843 293698, website www.rizrestaurant.com)



Why the Team at Perrys
Love Local Produce



Perrys
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

If proof were needed that accountants don't spend their every waking moment balancing budgets and tackling tax issues, then look no further than Perrys Chartered Accountants, sponsors of the Best Food Producer Category in the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food and Drink Awards.


Steve Hale
Director, Perrys Orpington Branch

Steve Hale, Director at Perrys Orpington Branch, has been given the enviable task of joining Sarah Sturt, Editor of Kent Life to judge the category of Chef of the Year, and explains: "We were delighted when we were approached by Kent Life to sponsor this incredibly worthwhile local initiative. Kent has such a rich pedigree in producing the very best food and drink and using this to create mouth-watering dishes. Indeed, some of our clients are renowned champions and producers of local food and drink."

However, Perrys connection with food and drink does not end with sponsorship of the Best Food Producer, as Steve goes on to outline: "Our involvement with this event got us thinking about how we could use the local food and drink theme to raise funds for our nominated charity, the Kent Cancer Trust, and at the same time provide a new and different networking forum for local businesses. After much discussion we developed a business networking initiative aptly named The Great Local Grub Club. The idea behind it is simple enough. Three times a year we will organise a lunchtime networking event at a lovely local restaurant or pub in Kent, one that's built a good reputation for serving delicious dishes using locally sourced ingredients. At each one of these meetings we'll invite a renowned guest speaker to inspire an audience of small to medium sized local businesses. Because there will be no charge to attend the launch event of The Great Local Grub Club in September, we will encourage each attendee to make a donation of £5 or more to the Kent Cancer Trust. We have some exciting things planned to make the launch event one to remember, including a very special guest speaker and of course a delicious free lunch."

The team at Perrys have become renowned for raising money for local charities. In 2013 they raised £14,000 for another Kent based charity, The Pickering Cancer Drop-in Centre. It's a figure they're keen to match this year for the Kent Cancer Trust.

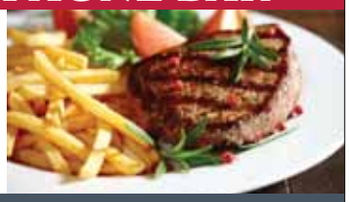
If you would like to find out more about The Great Local Grub Club and are interested in attending the first event on Wednesday 24th September (venue to be advised) please contact Abi Aitken on: 01689 823 175 or by email: aitken@perry-company.co.uk.

You can also find out more about Perrys Chartered Accountants and the full range of tax planning and accountancy services they provide by contacting Emma Palmer on: 01892 543 900 or by email: palmer@perry-company.co.uk. A complimentary introductory meeting is also available to any local businesses interested in learning more about what Perrys can offer. This meeting can take place at either the business premises or at any of the 7 Perrys branches. Visit www.perry-company.co.uk for details of their services and branches.

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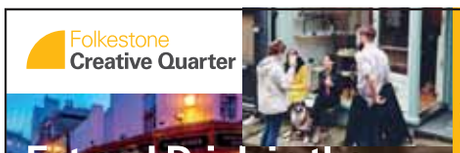
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Labour of love that comes with all the right ingredients

A REFRESHING addition to the county's dining scene, Saltwood on the Green is all about high-quality cooking where the food really is the star.

Beautifully-presented dishes such as herb gnocchi with summer vegetables and hake with surf clams, peas and radish are delighting customers and bringing them back again and again.

For chef and owner Jeff Kipp this venture is a labour of love, taking a site in the centre of Saltwood (the village's general store when it was built in 1900) and stripping it back to restore and reveal its original character.

Using carefully-chosen, sensitively-styled décor, he created an intimate, welcoming space, perfect for relaxing over a coffee or being daring at dinner.







Kipp comes with a provenance that is as impressive as the ingredients he uses: early spells with world-famous chefs such as Charlie Trotter in Chicago and Gordon Ramsay in Chelsea, not to mention his role as executive chef behind the success stories of SushiSamba and Duck and Waffle in London, have all led to this opportunity.

Born and bred in the US, he is determined to put a lifetime's experience of tastes, techniques and flavour combinations to delicious use.

No restaurant experience is complete without a great drinks list to dip into, so Kipp has brought on board Dan Redman-Hubley and Richard Turner, star names of the London and international bar scene, who are responsible for creating a range of alluring cocktail creations; from super classics such as the Mojito and Earl Grey Sour to Saltwood's own creations – a Cider & Black or Saltwood Spritz, anyone?

And when it comes to wines and beers, in keeping with the philosophy of impeccable but imaginative sourcing, the team has sidestepped the usual suspects in favour of a well-chosen and fairly-priced menu that includes beers from local craft and microbreweries and some of the more interesting reds and whites from Europe as well as the rest of the world.

Saltwood on the Green ticks all the boxes for inspired food, relaxed setting and exciting drinks, service and ambience.

Much credit for this must go to the third member of the SotG team, Gianpaolo Gori, who brings a wealth of restaurant management experience and bags of Italian charm to front-of-house operations.

Glowing reviews for countryside retreat

WITH 14 letting rooms, the family-run Woolpack Inn combines great hospitality and a fantastic location to make a trip to remember.

With vast oak beams, inglenook fireplaces and a history of landlords dating back to the 15th century, the inn has always provided a warm welcome.

The award-winning inn serves a home-cooked menu using locally-sourced ingredients. Simple, honest food is the order of the day.

Due to its popularity, booking is recommended.

Glowing reviews on Trip Advisor included…

''Possibly the best mushrooms we have ever had – absolutely amazing, and the garlic ciabatta was perfection. Followed by home-made fishcakes which were cooked perfectly, it was some of the best food we have had. We eat out a lot and this food will take some beating.''

''Once again had a great meal at the Woolpack Inn at Chilham. Went with a group for Sunday lunch after a lovely walk in the Kent countryside with the dogs. We would all really recommend this as a family-friendly place to enjoy beautiful surroundings and great atmosphere.''

Located in the village of Chilham on the junction of the A252 and A28 between Ashford and Canterbury, The Woolpack Inn is definitely a rural gem not to be missed.



TRADITIONAL: The Woolpack Inn



BANK ON THIS: The Three Tuns, situated on the Medway estuary, offers fine dining or more traditional pub food

Tuns of history combine to make this an experience not to be missed

TUCKED away in the village of Lower Halstow, on the banks of Medway estuary, is the warm welcome of The Three Tuns public house and restaurant.

Built in 1468, The Three Tuns has had an ale licence since 1764. Inside you will find open fires and a traditional-style pub, plus a separate dining area serving fine restaurant food with an ever-changing seasonal menu that uses local produce.

Whether you are looking for a fine dining experience or quality pub food, you will be sure to find what you want at The Three Tuns. Its high standards saw it awarded a place in the Good Beer Guide in 2012, 2013 and 2014, while it was a finalist at the Kent on Sunday and Kent Life Food and Drink Awards in 2013.

Aside from the great cuisine, you will always find four local ales on tap to enjoy from a variety of the county's microbreweries, along with a selection of local ciders.

A large beer garden provides a relaxing streamside decking area and plenty of seating. This is also the venue for many events, including farmers' markets and a summer Kentish Beer & Cider Festival.

This is a great meeting place for friends and family or the perfect place to start or end any walk. Take a few steps from the Saxon Shore Way and pop-in to enjoy a cream tea or a refreshing pint.

CHEF RECOMMENDS

Anchor & Hope
South Ash Road, Ash TN15 7ER
Telephone: 01474 872382
Website: anchorandhope-ash.com

Starter: Smoked duck salad – slices of smoked duck served on mixed leaves with walnuts and a raspberry coulis.
Main: King prawn linguine – king prawns cooked with sun-dried tomatoes, red chillies and white wine, topped with wild rocket.
Dessert: Home-made vanilla cheesecake served with a strawberry coulis with either Kent vanilla ice cream or a pot of fresh cream.

The Red Lion
Church Hill, Hernhill, Faversham ME13 9JR
Telephone: 01227 751207
Website: theredlion.org

Starter: Pork belly bites.
Main: Hickory home-smoked brisket with a bourbon peppercorn sauce, served with wedges and salad.
Dessert: Strawberries and cream.

Waggon at Hale
179 Capstone Road, Chatham ME5 7PP
Telephone: 01634 400800
Website: waggonathale.com

Starter: Duck and orange pâté served with toasted baguette and Bramley apple and cider chutney.
Main: Waggon Ultimate Burger – a handmade 1/2lb beefburger on a Kentish huffkin, bucket of gourmet chips and home-made coleslaw.
Dessert: Cookie dough and ice cream served warm, drizzled in chocolate sauce.

Jalsha Tandoori
169-171 Station Road, Sidcup DA15 7AA
Telephone: 0208 3000777
Website: www.waggonathale.com

Starter: Hot margh chat mossala.
Main: Nargis chicken.
Dessert: Fantanstica – crisp chocolate base layered with dairy vanilla and caramel ice cream.

feedback

your say...

Send us your views.
Write to: Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP
Email: editorial@kosmedia.co.uk
Twitter: @kosmedia

Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Our truckers see signs as challenge

I DRIVE a bus between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood, through Tudeley and Five Oak Green, and often squeeze past large lorries.

Some months ago the council erected blue signs at Somerhill roundabout and the A228 junction stating that the B2017 is 'Unsuitable for HGVs' with a pictogram of a lorry with a red diagonal line through it.

This has resulted in a reduction in lorry movements through Five Oak Green of about 1 per cent.

The occasional foreign lorry-driver, who can't read the words but understands the lorry symbol, turns back and finds another route.

UK drivers just ignore the sign and carry on as normal. Indeed, if you look on lorry-drivers' online forums, they regard such signs as 'a challenge'. The centre of Five Oak Green in particular is not suitable for lorries.

Can I ask what the council's intention was in erecting these daft signs as they are meaningless without an accompanying weight or width restriction? It looks like another example of KCC wasting our money.

Jeff Tucker, Snodland

Take action on parking fee hike

WITH inflation-busting increases in hospital parking charges for staff and visitors alike, it seems this 'tax on the sick' is being spent on paying a NHS trust manager £200,000 for working two to three days a week.

MP Tracey Couch said it was "obscene" and many would agree, but we can not do anything. She can.

Terry Hudson, Whitstable

Fears on shooting magpies in garden

I AM concerned that shooting enthusiast John Atkins (KoS letters. 29.06) may be inadvertently inciting some of your readers to commit an offence under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 if they shoot magpies in their gardens.

Mr Atkins states an owner of a garden who owns a legally-held weapon is entitled to give himself permission to shoot 'harmful' birds, including magpies.

It is true that under a 'General Licence' an 'authorised person' can kill corvids, including magpies, but such killing can only be carried out for the purpose of a) 'preventing serious damage to agricultural crops or livestock', b) 'preserving public safety' or c) 'conserving wild birds'.

Shooting birds in a garden is not relevant to 'serious damage to agricultural crops or preserving public safety'. Indeed there is a risk of actually endangering public safety by firing firearms in a garden – especially if the pellets travel into a neighbour's garden, which would legally constitute trespass.

However, the justification for shooting birds in a garden to 'conserve wild birds' can also be challenged, based on 40 years of scientific investigation by the British Trust for Ornithology.

The BTO confirms songbird populations have declined over the past few decades because of loss of food resources and nesting sites through intensification of farming and insecticides but that the numbers of magpies in an area has had no impact on songbirds.

The RSPB states that shooting corvids in a garden for the purpose of 'conserving wild birds' is therefore at least arguably 'illegal'.

The harsh fact is that lions kill baby zebras, badgers kill baby rabbits, wolves kill baby deer, and golden eagles kill fox cubs. That is how nature operates.

Mr Atkins's suggestion that anyone witnessing such a natural act as a predator taking prey in their garden should intervene by shooting the predator may be explained by his life membership of the British Association of Shooting and Conservation, which encourages people to shoot millions of birds for 'sport'.

John Bryant, urban wildlife consultant, Tonbridge

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Build our new houses to share 'stand-pipes'

YOUR article about water shortages in KoS last weekend was very interesting.

With Kent being a dry part of the country, some common sense is needed in the long term.

People need clean air to breathe and water to drink before they need housing, so we can't go on building houses for ever.

Maybe new houses should be built with stand-pipes outside for several houses and people can then carry in the water they need, as happened when I was a child, and their main water could be cut off when there is a crisis and they will use much less.

There was a scheme in Gravesham some years ago to give people water butts to save water and new houses could be built with pipework so that water from the shower is diverted to the water butt and used for the garden or for washing clothes by hand.

As the north and west tend to receive much more water, possibly old canals could be reinstated and water diverted to the south east?

Also perhaps farmers could be banned from spraying water on fields during the middle of the day when the sun is out and a lot of it is evaporated. It might cost them more in overtime payments, but that could be offset if the price of water increases.

Fracking should not be considered in the south east as it could easily poison the water supply – then people would not move to the area to avoid the danger and many of the new houses would be empty.

Jean Coulter, Gravesham

Ann Barnes: does cost justify role?

HOW much does Ann Barnes cost? What is her salary, and that of her staff? What is the cost of her office space? Does she get a travel allowance? What is the cost of whatever else she gets? Is she of more use than the number of police who could be employed for this amount of money?

Marika Sherwood, Oare

Be proud of an EU that upholds rights

ROGER Arnold traces the EU 'back to what Germany planned to do with us if it won the Second World War'.

The EU does not seek to eliminate Jews, Gypsies or disabled people; rather it ensures the rights of all of us to live and work in peace.

We should be proud and grateful to belong to an organisation, however imperfect, that for so long has helped keep previously bitter enemies from destroying each other.

Maurice Billingsley, Canterbury

Euro debate needs careful weighing

YOU will forgive me if I read with a certain horror the letter from Roger Arnold on 'EU takeover is not what they died for' in your June 22 edition.

I have seen an old issue of Picture Post showing UN feeding programmes for starving children in Vienna in 1948, something people today have forgotten or never knew.

The EU has been a huge force for good, bringing old foes together and spreading wealth across 28 countries, and which has – during the past 60 or so years – created a prosperous Europe which buys more than half of Britain's exports.

Any agenda to leave, whether Ukip's or someone else's, will undoubtedly have a negative effect on jobs, especially in an area like Thanet which has received large amounts of EU aid over the years.

Let's have a more balanced and less emotional debate, carefully weighing the pros and cons of UK membership of the EU.

George Cunningham, Lib Dem

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: ''We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise.'' This is summed up in the strapline 'Inspiring Communities'.

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles:

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

images of kent



Rodmersham Church

by **Colin Miles**

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TEXT IN NOW AND CHAT TO LOCAL PEOPLE. SEND: CHAT2 TO : 80098 (T&C'S BELOW)

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTM not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315**

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTM likeminded caring, happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169**

CHRISTINA, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very very adventurous seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. **Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 410127**

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053**

SHARON 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049**

FEMALE 38, attractive, African, single mum, seeks male, 35-50 for nights out, socialising, friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412793**

PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327**

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1961 Box No: 405297**

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475**

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box No: 366019**

FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045**

SUSIE, married, adventurous/dominant lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age/area for no strings fun. **Tel: 0905 002 1945 Box No: 412285**

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871**

SAM, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box No: 408297**

SLIM petite, attractive brunette, 56, British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129**

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FREE (Standard Network rates apply)

BLONDE pretty, long legged, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410585**

JULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTM someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513**

JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865**

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTM similar fun genuine guy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537**

MELANIE tall curvy attractive bubbly female who loves meals out, cosy nights in with a nice wine, walking, seeks professional male with outgoing GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411509**

LYN 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137**

CAROLINE blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413**

RACHEL 39, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 6ins, bubbly, outgoing, naughty, busty, divorced, seeks male for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410835**

SUE optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467**

CATHY very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional sassy female who loves to be wined, dined and romanced. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301**

JAN 38yr old attractive lonely female looking for uncomplicated fun times only. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409107**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033**

64YR old lady, seeking male for friendship, companionship, outings and interesting conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411975**

CAROLINE 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891**

33YR old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887**

CINDY 31 attractive, size 12 brown eyed blonde, new to this but sick of passing up potential soul mate so thought I wld give it a go. ACA **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411873**

RITA divorced care worker with no ties, 5ft 1ins, dark hair, enjoys meals out, cosy nights in, seeking male 45-55 with GSOH and similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411775**

JANET 5ft 8ins, slim 12, pretty, green eyes, brown hair, seeking male companion for friendship hopefully leading to a relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411689**

SOPHIE 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. GSOH essential. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717**

34YR single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709**

FLOR beautiful educated European blonde, articulate, seeking similar intelligent well-mannered mature gent to enjoy socialising, conversing and quality times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408293**

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395**

MARIE 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/ active, WLTM fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037**

KAREN blonde blue eyed slim 35yr old interesting female looking for good times, call me if are in a similar situation, board and looking for some fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410719**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

LADY 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301**

BUSTY Caribbean lady who loves music, dance and singing, looking for nice older guy for mutual adult no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410305**

RACHAEL 36yr old nurse looking to raise the temperature of reliable sincere male. I have my OACH, a single mum to 1, love gym, cosy meals, animals etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411045**

SUSAN 29 green eyes, dark hair, slim, looking for Mr tall dark and handsome to take me out, enjoy adult times without complications just fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410957**

Men Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. mydate24

TEXT IN NOW AND CHAT TO LOCAL PEOPLE. SEND: CHAT2 TO : 80098 (T&C'S BELOW)

WRITER tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749**

BARRY divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717**

MALE seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703**

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212**

LOCAL man wishes to meet nice lady for fun/friendship with a view to possible relationship. Respond if interested. Sevenoaks. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4334837**

FRANK 54, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, smoker, seeking friendship with mature female, 40-60. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412893**

COMPANY Director, mature, late 50's, seeking female, any age for mutually rewarding friendship, Kent/Surrey area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412819**

IAN 5ft 11ins, likes rock/roll, singing, making people laugh, seeking someone special. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412799**

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725**

MALE 71, 5ft 10ins, medium build, N/S, likes gardening, dogs, seeks female, 65-71 for friendship/companionship and outings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411587**

MALE 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477**

EARLY 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441**

JAMES young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345**

EX headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263**

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235**

BESIDE the Pointe. Literate self-possessing, legginess, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223**

45YR old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship. Herne Bay area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993**

DEREK seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433**

PAUL own business, looking for daytime fun with lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411127**

DAVE 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971**

DAVE 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. Surrey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899**

MALE likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

DEREK 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511**

MALE 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309**

RAY 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411147**

WORLD war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133**



PHIL 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351**

ADAM 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421**

41YR old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411**

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377**



RETIRED male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343**

CHRIS widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191**

ADVENTUROUS male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339**



CANTERBURY mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745**

MALE seeking female to love and be loved back. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408941**

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025**

DIVORCED male, seeks Oriental lady, likes animals, music, will take care of you forever. Thanet area, willing to travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409963**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409961**

TALL black male, 45, likes meals out, good company, romantic, GSOH, light hearted, seeks easy-going female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409621**

DAVE 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541**

RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Medway area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343**

MALE 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855**

STEVE 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835**

ANTHONY 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355**

RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Dover. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409533**

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405857**

RETIRED male, 66, 6ft 2ins, easy going, GSOH, loyal, loves pets, meals out, life, seeks lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407317**

CHRIS 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, slim, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575**

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business

Consultation begins on £2bn Paramount Park

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

DEVELOPERS behind the multi-billion-pound Paramount theme park are to stage a series of public consultations, giving the public the first real look at its plans.

It is claimed the £2bn project on the Swanscombe peninsula will create 27,000 jobs and it should be open by the end of 2019 if all goes to plan.

With a deal in place to use branding of big-name movies from the Paramount Hollywood studio, it intends to become one of Europe's biggest venues, rivalling Disneyland Paris.

The company behind the project, London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH), will hold the events this month as part of a year-long consultation phase with local communities.

It has sent some 89,000 letters to households and other interested parties throughout north Kent to inform them of the consultation events, which will take place between July 10-12.

Fenlon Dunphy, on behalf of LRCH, said: "We are looking forward to meeting the local community and ensuring that they are involved in every stage of the year-long consultation process.



PLANS: How theme park will look

"We think it is important that we consider the most appropriate and accessible way for people to be involved in our proposals for the London Paramount Entertainment Resort.

"We hope that everyone will fully embrace the opportunity to take part in the first stage of public exhibitions, which are specifically designed to establish the preferred communication and consultation methods of the local community and interested parties."

The plans, which would include an events venue capable or rivalling the O2 Arena in Greenwich, would take shape on an 872-acre brownfield site.

Such is the economic potential of the plans to the county, a proposal to site a third Thames crossing in Swanscombe was ruled out for fear it would scupper the park plans.

Originally unveiled in 2012, developers have spent the two years since seeking to secure the funding.

The public exhibitions will be held on:

July 10: 2pm-8pm, Ebbsfleet Academy (in the sports hall), Southfleet Road, Swanscombe.

July 11: 11am-2pm, Eastgate (North Kent Community Church), 141 Springhead Parkway, Gravesend.

July 11: 4.30pm-8pm, British Legion Greenhithe, London Road, Greenhithe

July 12: noon-5pm, Swanscombe Leisure Centre, Craylands Lane, Swanscombe.

Free advice at start-up event

ENTREPRENEURS and owners of young businesses are being invited to take part in a special event taking place in Detling later this year.

Kent 2020 Vision Start-Up Live takes place at the Kent Event Centre on October 22.

Keynote speaker will be Kevin Byrne, founder of Checkatrade.com. Other events taking place as part of the day include advice on social media and marketing, legal issues and staff.

The event is free to attend.

Commendation for family firm

BUS and coach operator Chalkwell has been recognised at a national awards ceremony.

The Sittingbourne-based firm was presented with a 'commended for excellence' certificate in the 'corporate social responsibility' category at the Red Ribbon Awards, held recently in London.

They celebrate and recognise community-based organisations.

£6.5m tech centre at college unveiled by energy minister

By Charlotte Hampshaw

EAST Kent College's new Centre for Environmental Technologies has officially been opened by the energy minister Gregory Barker.

The £6.5m centre, located at the college's Broadstairs campus, is the only one of its kind in Kent. It will provide students with the opportunity to gain valuable skills in renewable energy, engineering and construction.

The energy minister said: "This is not only great for Thanet but a real investment in our country's future as a world leader in green technology, and a competitor in the global race for green jobs and growth."

Local employers were among 100 guests to the college's grand opening.

They were also able to see the Future Building, which provides a showcase for a host of practical skills.

College principal Graham Razey said: "The Future Building will enable students to understand how traditional trades and technologies are being adapted and advanced.

"This will provide the best possible opportunity for each student's future employment in a workplace where energy efficiency will be of increasing importance.

"We are extremely proud of our new building and the opportunities it offers our students. Our aim is to create fulfilling futures for our students, enabling them to access jobs in emerging sectors of employment."

East Kent College was previously known as Thanet College before undergoing a rebrand two years ago.

It is also taking on the Folkestone and Dover campuses of K College as of the start of the next academic year following the break-up of the further education organisation after it ran into financial troubles.



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AMALFI COAST CAPRI & ROME

Champagne check-in

Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure
10 days, half board, £1199pp
Departs 18 September, 2014

QUOTE: AG9-KOS

Amalfi and its coast is one of Europe's most breathtaking regions where cliffs terraced with scented lemon or olive groves plunge down into sparkling seas. Your holiday starts with a glass of bubbly at St Pancras Champagne Bar. Our journey to Italy is by Eurostar to Paris, then overnight sleeper train to Milan, in a private 2-berth cabin and fast train to Rome. With an early afternoon departure from London, we'll be in central Rome the next morning. Excursions will take in Rome, Ravello, Amalfi, Positano, Sorrento and the Isle of Capri. We stay at Minori with amazing views of the mountains and Mediterranean Sea.

INCLUDED:
• Escorted throughout
• Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras - 1 glass of Champagne or alternative non-alcoholic drink
• Return rail travel from London (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Milan with 2-berth cabin each way
• Fast train from Milan to Rome
• Overnight stay in Rome with sight-seeing excursion
• 6 nights half board hotel stay
• Visits to Amalfi, Positano & Capri with options to visit Ravello, Pompeii and Herculanium • Transfers abroad



TUSCANY COAST & COUNTRY EXPLORER

Free Drinks

Escorted Holiday by Rail
8 days, half board-plus, £899pp
Departs 20 September, 2014

QUOTE: TR9-KOS

Come with us to incomparable Tuscany - certainly one of the most beautiful regions in Italy. There are many things to see and lots to do from visiting hilltop villages, to enjoying beautiful landscapes and chic coastal resorts. The Tuscan seaside town of Forte dei Marmi has been described as the region's Beverly Hills and here we enjoy free drinks every night at our hotel. We will visit Lucca, Pisa, Florence and Portovenere - with access to stunning Cinque Terra. There is also the opportunity to visit Portofino.

INCLUDED:
• Escorted throughout
• Return rail travel from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request)
• 1 night hotel B&B in or near Nice & 6 nights in Italy with 6 buffet breakfasts, 6 dinners & Free Drinks from 6pm to 10pm every night
• Excursions & transfers abroad

4 STAR BRUSSELS' CARPET OF FLOWERS & BRUGES



QUOTE: BC8-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
4 days, £359pp
Departs 15 August, 2014

CHAMPAGNE CHECK-IN

Come with us to see Belgium's Carpet of Flowers - set in the unique, ancient surroundings of the Grand-Place in Brussels. The beauty and diversity of the displays is truly magical. Our holiday starts with a glass of Bubbly at St Pancras famous Champagne bar before taking an early afternoon Eurostar direct to Brussels. We stay for 3 nights in a 4-star city-centre hotel and also visit the delightful city of Bruges.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel London St Pancras to Brussels (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 3 nights B&B stay at a 4-star hotel in Brussels • Excursion to Bruges by train • Transfers from station to hotel on arrival and departure

ZUNDERT FLOWER PARADE & ANTWERP



QUOTE: AZ9-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
4 days £369pp
Departs 5 September, 2014

EXCURSIONS INCLUDED

Come with us on a charming break taking in the spectacular Zundert Flower Parade and Antwerp. The parade is made up of breathtaking displays entirely created by volunteers using dahlias - the largest of its kind in the world. Many of them are animated, giving a truly realistic appearance. The town is also renowned as the birth place of Vincent Van Gogh. Antwerp, Belgium's second biggest city, is our base for this break and is a true architectural wonder.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Return Eurostar rail travel from London St Pancras to Antwerp (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 3 nights B&B stay at a 3-star hotel in Antwerp • Excursion to Zundert Flower Parade including reserved seating • Transfers from station to hotel on arrival and departure

SPECTACULAR CORSICA



QUOTE: CR9-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
10 days, half board, £1099pp
Departs 2 September, 2014

EXCURSIONS INCLUDED

Corsica's landscape can change dramatically from glittering bays and fabulous beaches to jagged peaks and breathtaking valleys, dense forests and enigmatic hilltop villages. We travel to Corsica by rail from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Nice where we stay overnight. We continue by ferry to Bastia, then to our 3-star hotel, overlooking the sea in Calvi. Included excursions take in the best of the island. We return by ferry to Savona, continuing to Nice for an overnight stay, then to London by rail.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Return rail travel to Nice • 2 nights hotel stay in or near Nice (Half Board outbound and B&B on return) • Return ferry to Corsica • 7 nights half board hotel stay in Calvi, Corsica • All excursions • Transfers abroad

BRAEMAR GATHERING & HIGHLAND STEAM



QUOTE: BG9-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
6 days, half board, £609pp
Departs 4 September, 2014

EXCURSIONS INCLUDED

Since 1848 the world-famous Braemar Gathering has been regularly attended by the reigning Monarch (as the Chieftain of the gathering) and members of the Royal Family. We will visit the gathering with reserved seating. We also tour the Trossachs and cruise on Loch Katrine; Ride the Strathspey Steam Railway to Aviemore; and visit Queens View and Pitlochry.

Note: Attendance by the Queen and Prince Charles not guaranteed

INCLUDED:
• Escorted throughout from London • Return rail travel from London to Pitlochry • 5 nights at a 3-star hotel in Perthshire with 5 dinners and 5 breakfasts • Loch Katrine Cruise • Ride on the Strathspey Railway • Entry to Braemar Gathering - seated in open stand • All transfers & touring in Scotland

BRUGES & VALKENBURG CHRISTMAS MARKETS RIVER CRUISE



QUOTE: PC11-4-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
5 days, semi all inclusive from £479pp
Departs 24 November, 2014

FREE DRINKS

Join us for a relaxing river cruise taking-in: Valkenburg with its unique Christmas Caves; beautiful Bruges with its festive atmosphere and markets; Hasselt, a charming Belgian town with a festive winterland; lovely Ghent; and Brussels, the Belgian capital. GN Voyages is exclusively chartering the popular mps Princess again with great hospitality and entertainment on board.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Return rail travel from London St Pancras to Brussels (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 4 nights full-board on the mps Princess sharing an upgraded twin-bed outside cabin • Beer, wine, choice of 2 Dutch spirits & soft drinks served at lunch & dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad

Note: Free cabin upgrade is from Main Deck Rear grade MR2 to Main Deck Midship or Forward grade MD2, usually £529pp.

5-STAR RHINE CHRISTMAS MARKETS RIVER CRUISE



QUOTE: AR12-KOS

Escorted Rail or Fly Cruise
5 days, all inclusive, from £649pp
Departs 15 December, 2014

FREE DRINKS

Experience the Christmas splendours and stunning scenery along the Rhine on this festive river cruise. The Christmas markets in Strasbourg, Mainz and Mannheim glitter in matchless splendour. The 5-star A-ROSA VIVA plays host for your all-inclusive cruise offering all modern-day comforts combined with lots of space for relaxation and recreation plus an informal, friendly atmosphere.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad • Return rail travel from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Cologne OR return flights from Gatwick - supp't may apply • 4-night all-inclusive cruise on the A-ROSA VIVA sharing an S category cabin - upgrades available • All meals on board • Choose from more than 100 beverages at the bar • City tour of Strasbourg • Entertainment • Transfers in Cologne

Note: Price of Cruises and/or Holidays by Air subject to cabin and/or flight availability at time of booking - supplement may apply

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

Preview

Nissan X-Trail

Price:	£13,420
Driving appeal (expected):	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Hyundai Santa Fe

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GO-GETTER: Now in its third generation, Nissan's X-Trail has taken on some of the design traits of the popular and best-selling Qasqai and Juke

Nissan hits X-trail… again

Having started it all, the Japanese carmaker wants the new X-Trail to seal its reputation as *the* brand for crossovers – and is on its way to achieving this

NOT content with inventing the crossover segment and then cleaning up with its big-selling Qashqai, Nissan seems to want it all.

First, the Qashqai was followed by its pugnacious baby sister, the Juke, and the Japanese marque has now given its third-generation X-Trail the crossover treatment.

Instead of the robust looks of its two predecessors, the latest X-Trail could indeed be an inflated Qashqai and this will surely be good news for Nissan's growing sales.

And with an interior aping the quality of other recent Nissans, there will be a few premium brands that might worry about this slick new X-Trail nibbling at their SUV sales.

However, I rather regret that the old X-Trail experience has been reduced; while rivals such as the Toyota RAV4 and Honda CR-V were dumbed down and any credible off-road ability excised, the previous X-Trail retained some ability to rough it.

Indeed, the original car (2001-07) was launched with an interior that could be hosed out in the best tradition of proper 4x4s, while the second-generation car (2007-14) could tackle some pretty tough terrain thanks to good clearance and underbody protection.

That is but a dream for its slick successor, which will be more at home on the road.

Nissan has also done a clever thing: the previous Qashqai used to be offered as a standard five-seater or as a stretched 'seven-up' model, but the latter has now been dropped.

Instead, this new X-Trail offers five- or seven-seat accommodation within the same bodyshell, allowing Nissan to dispense with a costly third-body option in the form of the Qashqai seven-seater.

In the modern way, the new car is also available in front-wheel-drive (FWD) or 4x4 formats, the former catering for people who want high-riding SUV/crossover style with economy, too.

The FWD option keeps prices sensible, too: from £22,995 for the entry-level five-seat Visia variant – £2,600 less than its predecessor.

Even the predicted best-seller, the five-seat 2WD Acenta, costs just £24,795 – £800 less than before.

For those wanting 4x4, this starts at £26,495, which also looks good value against the opposition.

A premium cabin, plus safety and driver aids, are a major feature of the new car; even entry-level Visia trim is offered with a Smart Vision Pack for a modest £495.

For now, the engine choice is limited to a single 130PS (128bhp) 1.6-litre diesel with so-so CO_2 emissions of 129g/km. It delivers decent performance – as good as the previous two-litre variant, says Nissan – and, in FWD manual format, will return a potential 57mpg on the official combined cycle.

But it is the newcomer's crossover flexibility that will win most friends. Nissan says it was designed from the outset to include an optional seven-seat format and ensures every passenger has a great view out.

It also has a double load floor allowing up to nine configurations, notably the creation of upper and lower areas with a simple single-handed move.

In its topmost position, the floorboard can hold up to 10 kilograms of luggage, or 75kg in its middle position. This solution enables the user to store, for example, a baby buggy and large items below while creating a fully-usable upper load surface for smaller, lighter items or shopping.

Access to the luggage area has also been made easier with remote operation of the power tailgate.



KEA

Other view…

the Petrolhead
Never liked the X-Trail: not a proper 4x4 but ugly anyway. This one is better looking, but I hope it gains bigger engines.

She says
I never liked the look of the old car, either, but this has some of the Qashqai's style about it, and seven seats is a bonus.

the Eco-warrior
I can't really condone it, but if you must have a big wagon like this there are worse for economy and emissions.

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Model shown is an X-Trail Tekna. Terms and Conditions apply. Nissan Motor GB (Ltd), The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.







SPORTY BUT SO MUCH MORE: Seat's Ibiza Cupra model is also refined and comfortable as well as being capable of tackling the odd empty, windy road

Spain's super new Cupra does 'everyday car' well

Understated visually, the Cupra version of the SEAT Ibiza is a true everyday runabout – with extra fun power on tap, says **Steve Loader**

SEAT IBIZA SC CUPRA

Price:	£18,770
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
Reliability:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★
Road tax:	£125/year
Best rival:	Peugeot 208GTi

Kent dealers

Barretts of Canterbury
01227 864444

Hidsons, Rainham
01634 235191

Hollis Motors, Dover
01304 206710

THINGS are looking up for SEAT.

The Spanish marque is the smallest of the VW Group's four main arms, with just half the workforce of Skoda, the other 'minnow', but it has recently launched a range of impressive variations on the theme of its VW Golf-based Leon medium-size model.

But one of the brand's existing success stories has been the smaller Ibiza supermini launched in 2008, a car with distinctive good looks plus a keen ride and handling, whether in five-door, three-door SC or useful ST (estate) format.

And, as ever with SEAT, there are potent FR and Cupra versions on offer. We're concentrating on the latter here.

Cupra is SEAT's GTI badge and stands for Cup Racing; it's no idle boast, either.

This little car will hit 62mph in 6.9 seconds, courtesy of its 180PS (178bhp) turbocharged and supercharged direct injection 1.4-litre engine.

It's a potent force and yet that power is applied cleanly to the road without a bucking steering wheel.

Purists might complain that it is, however, only available with the VW Group's DSG seven-speed auto gearbox.

But that actually proves to be a blessing rather than a curse because it adds to the rapid impression gained that this is an everyday sporting car: one you can have fun with on those rare occasions when road conditions allow but also comfortable and flexible enough for the remaining 90 per cent or so.

I proved the point with an 800-mile round trip over just three days – don't ask!

But the little Cupra was no burden at all; the auto dealt with the stop-start traffic jams, while the manual selection on the stick shift or F1-style steering-wheel paddles allowed rapid gear-changes when conditions allowed.

The bonus here also is that there is a 'Sport' mode, speeding auto changes to the seven-speed transmission and boosting engine power.

The car is also very refined for such a sportster; the suspension is firm but not unusually so for such a competent-handling car, while intrusion from the road and tyres is quite low.

Access to the rear seats is fairly good and the cabin is well organised, with sturdy materials used, though I felt it could use a bit more razzamatazz to suit its sporting temperament.



You get Cupra-branded sports seating and drilled aluminium pedals, but there's little else to upstage rivals like the MINI Cooper S or Fiat 500 Abarth, though the equally tractable and reserved Peugeot 208GTi is probably a fairer comparison.

For a car costing almost 19 grand, though, the Ibiza's exterior could do with a little more presence, too, though its understatement could be an asset in the eyes of some.

Clues to its feisty abilities include piercing bi-xenon headlights, LED daytime running lights, gloss-black door-mirrors, exclusive Cupra front and rear bumpers – with the latter housing a chunky trapezoidal exhaust pipe – and then there's the smart and tidy 17-inch 'Barcino' alloys.

Out on the road, the Cupra can toddle along without much need to trouble its 'twin-charger' engine and you might even get close to its official combined 47.9mpg – though bear in mind that this has to be super unleaded petrol.

However, there seems little point in paying extra for a car with such potent power on tap and not using it – and it's a delight.

Even a modest blip on the throttle will induce a bark of power and the Cupra will take off, but it never totally loses its cool and will handle a winding road with ease, maintaining a flat stance even on hard cornering.

KEA

FirstGEAR Motoring news



A new X-Perience

THERE seems no limit as yet to spin-offs from SEAT's latest-generation Leon model.

Only ever sold as a five-door hatchback in its previous incarnation, the VW-owned Spanish marque's midsize contender is already offered as a three-door SC coupé hatch and ST estate, with the latter now gaining a four-wheel-drive country set 'all-road' edition, the SEAT Leon X-PERIENCE, available to order from September, with delivery near year end.



Estate is due soon

MERCEDES-BENZ'S next-generation C-Class Estate arrives in September, just three months after the elegant new saloon and at a modest £1,200 premium – from £28,055.

Five engines and three trims are offered and standard kit includes powered tailgate, roof-rails and split folding rear-seats.

Two diesels are the star turn; the 220 BlueTEC and the 250 BlueTEC produce 170bhp and 204bhp and 108 g/km and 117 g/km of CO_2 emissions respectively.



Vivaro flies the flag

VAUXHALL has launched its all-new Vivaro panel van, securing 1,200 jobs at the UK's last van-manufacturing plant and winning £185 million investment there.

Rival Ford shut its Transit factory in Southampton last year, but Vauxhall's Luton site continues adding to the eight million-plus vehicles built there since 1905.

UK plc also benefits: 40 per cent of the Vivaro's content is from this country's suppliers – 60 per cent more than before.

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This post would suit newly qualified teachers, or those wishing to gain further experience of SEN. Comprehensive induction and training will be provided. Telephone enquiries and informal visits to the school welcomed

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 11th July 2014

For further details and a job description, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

Swale Academies Trust

Westlands School

Westlands Avenue,Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

Office Assistant
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This successful secondary school is seeking an Office Assistant to join its effective and dedicated team of Administration staff. Primary duties will be that of Receptionist.

The successful applicant will be the first point of contact for visitors and callers to the school, and will need to demonstrate personal qualities such as excellent communication skills and the ability to remain polite and professional at all times. Applicants should also have some experience of working in a customer service environment or in a busy office.

Other duties will include clerical tasks; therefore a working knowledge of Microsoft Office packages is required.

Recruitment packs including a person specification and job description are available from Westlands School or online (www.westlands.org.uk). Please note that we cannot accept CVs without an application form. Applicants should also include a covering letter detailing how they meet the person specification.

Closing date: Wednesday 9 July 2014.

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Contact Details

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA
Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA

Science

Maths & Computing

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732
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01227 472050—office@homestartcanterbury.org

Dover Scheme
Tues 16th September—Tues 21st Oct 9.30-2.30, With a coffee morning on the 8th September @ 10.00
01304 242314—office@home-startdoverdistrict.org.uk

Ashford Scheme
Wed 1st October 2014—Wed 26th November 9.45-2.00
01233 647209 info@home-start-ashford.org.uk

If these timings do not suit you, or the course has already started, please still apply as there will be a rolling programme and we will contact you about the next one.

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PLANNING

Folkestone Hythe & Romney Marsh Shepway District Council

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/0730/SH† - 158E High Street Hythe Kent CT21 5JR - Change of use and conversion of first floor and loft space, from gymnasium into two self-contained flats.

Y14/0714/SH - 143 Sandgate High Street Sandgate Folkestone Kent CT20 3DA - Installation of a rear dormer window following removal of the existing and installation of inset full height roof window and balcony together with other alterations.

Y14/0687/SH* - Former St Marys Westbrook School Ravenlea Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2JU – Erection of 28 houses being details pursuant to outline planning permission reference Y10/0680/SH (details relating to scale, landscaping and appearance).

Y14/0723/SH† - Royal Oak Motel Ashford Road Newingreen Kent CT21 4JB - Replacement of render to front (south) elevation.

Y14/0598/SH - Lambourne Lympne Castle The Street Lympne Hythe Kent - Listed building consent for works to facilitate the conversion of outbuildings (garages and store) and associated courtyard and rear patio to cookery school and bistro, including infilling of an existing external opening, creation of a blocked opening and installation garage doors reinstated, renovation of existing garage doors, installation of windows and doors into existing garage door openings, replacement access door to the rear patio area and patio screen, new door and flat roof to store building (with flue through the roof), installation of external lighting system to the courtyard area, resurfacing of the courtyard and rear patio, opening up of internal space by the removal of blockwork walls, raising of floor levels and resurfacing and installation of entrance gates to the courtyard.

Y14/0597/SH - Lambourne Lympne Castle The Street Lympne Hythe Kent - Change of use and conversion of outbuildings (garages and store) for use as a cookery school and bistro together with two ancillary external patio areas.

Y14/0738/SH - 61 Bouverie Road West Folkestone Kent CT20 2RN - Felling of a Leyland Cypress tree situated within a conservation area.

Y14/0744/SH† - 14 Twiss Avenue Hythe Kent CT21 5NU - Overall reduction by one third of an Oak and a Bay tree situated within a conservation area.

Y14/0688/SH - Former St Marys Westbrook School Ravenlea Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2JU - Section 73 application for variation of conditions 4, 7, 9, 12, 14 and 19 of planning permission Y10/0680/SH for the erection of 28 houses in relation to Code for Sustainable Homes, Refuse and Recyclables, Landscaping Details, Boundary Treatment, Foul and Surface Water Disposal and Visibility Splays.

Y14/0732/SH - Home Farm Cottage Longage Hill Rhodes Minnis Canterbury Kent - Erection of a single storey rear extension.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

† - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for New Premises Licence

We 44 Two Medway Community Sports Centre and Club, Featherby Road, Gillingham, ME8 6AN hereby give notice that we have made an application to the to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR for grant of a new premises license to permit the following licensable activities.

Sale of Alcohol (10.00– 22.30 Sunday, 10.00 – 24.00, Monday – Thursday, 10.00 -01.00 Friday and Saturday, Bank Holiday Sunday and New Year's Eve), Regulated Entertainment (10.00 – 22.00 Sunday, 10 00 – 23.00 Monday – Thursday and 10.00 – 24.00 Friday and Saturday, Bank Holiday Sundays and New Year's Eve) and Late Night Refreshment (23.00 -24.00 Monday – Thursday and 23.00 – 01.00 Friday and Saturday, Bank Holiday Sundays and New Year's Eve)

In respect of the premises situated at 44 Two Medway Community Sports Centre and Club, Featherby Road, Gillingham, ME8 6AN. A Copy of the application can be inspected at the Licensing Department, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR during office hours or on our website at www.medway.gov.uk/licensing.

Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing to: Licensing Unit at the Council Offices or by e-mail to licensing@medway.gov.uk by 24th July 2014 or by telephone 01634 337107 after which date no objections will be considered.

It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is £5000.

Date 24th June 2014

Stephen Thomas LAW, Solicitors for the Applicant, 8, Grassmere, Leybourne, Kent ME19 5QP

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for Premises Licence

We, the University of Kent, are applying for a new premises licence at: Unit 5, Block T, Victory Pier, Pier Road, Gillingham ME17 1RL. Our application is made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR.

We are applying for the following licensable activities: Plays, films, indoor sporting events, live and recorded music and the performance of dance between 07.00 and 23.00hrs every day, but on no more 50 days in the academic year from 07.00 to 01.00hrs; The sale of alcohol both on and off the premises, between 07.00 and 22.45hrs every day, but on no more 50 days in the academic year from 07.00 to 00.45hrs, with only on-sales between 23.00 and 00.45hrs; Late Night Refreshment on no more 50 days in the academic year from 23.00 to 01.00hrs.

Should you wish to make representations to the council it must be in writing and/or you can view our application by contacting the council on 01634 337107 or 337108 by: 27/07/2014.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

For more information contact Licensing Unit by telephone: Licensing Services - 01634 337107 or 337108; Enforcement - 01634 337112 or 337106 or by email: licensing@medway.gov.uk

Write to: Licensing Unit, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

SUBZERO (2003) LIMITED trading as SUBZERO of Unit 3, Mill Farm, Hunton Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9QX **is applying to change an existing license as follows:**

To add an Operating Centre to keep 1 vehicles and 0 trailers at Unit 3, Mill Farm, Hunton Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9QX

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be effected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at:
Hillcrest House,
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF
stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

SUBZERO (2003) LIMITED trading as SUBZERO of Unit 3, Mill Farm, Hunton Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9QX **is applying to change an existing license as follows:**

To add an Operating Centre to keep 7 vehicles and 2 trailers at Norish Ltd., Bailey Drive, Gillingham Business Park, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0PZ

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be effected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at:
Hillcrest House,
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF
stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

LICENSING ACT 2003

I Lawang Shah give notice that I am applying to Medway Council for the grant of a new premises licence for Medina Exotic Foods, 259 High Street, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4BQ in order to allow the following licensable activity:

The sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises only Monday to Sunday 08:00hours to 20:00hours

Any responsible authority or any other person wishing to make representations to the council must do so in writing to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR. (where the application can be inspected during normal office hours.) By 23rd July 2014 licensing@medway.gov.uk

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

County boxers who are in

The Queensbury Boxing League offers fighters an option away from the professional and amateur arenas. **David Mairs** speaks to co-founder Alan Foley to discover more.



RED ALERT: Maidstone's Oliver Lawrence, this picture, left, is tipped as a long-term prospect. Below, Tom Woledge, from Bean, is a former Junior ABA champion.

BOXING can be, almost by definition, an unforgiving world. Lose one fight and the pressure is on; lose two and the pundits are talking about your time in the sport coming to an end for good.

It's an environment that has seen many promising fighters call a premature end to their career, but the Queensbury Boxing League looks to give its participants the chance to fight without the pressure that one moment of poor concentration or a dropped guard can spell a split-second finale to their life in the ring.

Set up in the autumn of 2009 by Alan Foley, "a complete boxing fan", and Ross Minter, an English welterweight champion and world-title challenger, the league offers an increasingly popular alternative to the more traditional arenas of amateur and professional boxing.

"Boxers in this country are controlled and regulated from as young as 10 or 11 at the amateur level and up to the age of 35 or 40 nowadays through an established code under the British Boxing Board of Control," said Foley.

"We had a desire to provide a third platform for boxers distinct to either the amateur or professional set-up."

So what level of boxers was the league hoping to attract?

"They come from across the board. For example, they might be amateurs who had given up – they still loved the sport but couldn't find the time to make the necessary commitment.

"It's hard to keep in shape for boxing – it's not like Sunday football, where if you don't do work on your strength or regular training it doesn't really matter. You can't just move in and out of boxing.

"There is a huge pool of boxers – it's like with football, where there are loads who are not good enough to play in the Premier League and are not going to make a career out of the game. However, there are many other leagues where they can still play.

"Boxing did not have anything like that. There's such a huge focus on the 'Golden O' [an undefeated record] that a couple of defeats mean you're viewed as washed up or finished in the game.

"We wanted a fairer system in a league where people of equal ability would be able to fight each other."

The Queensbury Boxing League comprises some 10 weight divisions from super-featherweight to heavyweight and within each of those divisions are four levels: Novice, Regional, National and British. It the last that is most prestigious.

The season begins in February and runs until July. There is a break in August before it continues from September until December, so in essence the season lasts 10 months.

Generally, boxers will have a maximum of six fights a season depending on their availability.

Those finishing highest in their divisions will have earned the right to battle for a title.

"Our stronghold is the South East and London because that's where the greatest pool of fighters is," said Foley.

"We're growing all the time and getting more interest from people across the country calling us.

"At Alexandra Palace at the weekend, for example, we've got someone coming down from Glasgow to fight an opponent from Reading.

"Over the next 18 months we're looking to expand the league across the country and we'll be putting shows on the road."

That Alexandra Palace bill on Saturday, entitled Kings Of The Palace, features 18 bouts, with six fighters from Kent involved.

Former Junior ABA champion Tom Woledge, from Bean, will be facing unbeaten cruiserweight Ben Vickers, having taken a short break from the sport.

Woledge, 19, will be representing the Punchout Boxing Academy in Dartford, as will John Moloney, who will be looking for his first victory in the competition when he takes on super-middleweight rival Andy Adumoah, from south London.

Another Dartford fighter, Matt Hilliker, will be competing for the vacant cruiserweight title, while Maidstone's Oliver Lawrence had been due to fight for the National light middleweight title but an injury meant he elected instead for a three-round bout, fearing the five rounds of a title contest could potentially be too damaging.

Margate light-heavyweight Jason Chay will be facing Tom Rankin, with Colin Wilby, yet another Dartford cruiserweight, taking on Mitch Dufffus.

Anyone we should be especially keeping an eye out for?

"You don't like to single out any particular boxer, but the one who's got real potential is Oliver Lawrence – he's exciting people," said Foley.

Flying the Kentish flag last month, meanwhile, was Chatham boxer Bill Harmer, who took the Novice heavyweight title.

While the ambition among the fighters might vary in intensity, the aspiration of those behind the Queensbury Boxing League is clear.

"We want to make it the pinnacle for boxers outside the amateur and professional world. The UFC is the pinnacle of martial arts in America and we're setting out to be that in this country with boxing," said Foley. "We have ex-amateurs who want to go professional – it's a great way for these guys to do that. I think of it a bit like the college draft system in the States.



KEA

"It's also a second chance for those who didn't quite make it as professionals. Others don't want to turn pro but are looking for the experience.

"We have a lot of people come to us and say they love boxing but can't make that commitment to training and lifestyle – Queensbury, with its shorter two- and three-minute rounds, offers them the chance to stay in the sport."

What the league will not accept is an aspiring young boxer simply looking for the ubiquitous and unloved 'journeyman' to provide him some relatively easy ring experience and doubtless be on the receiving end of a good hiding.

"That's a big no-no," said Foley.

Boxing, like any spectator sport, of course, is about looking after the interests of competitor and fan alike, something of which Foley is acutely aware.

"Of course many people will be there to support one particular fighter, but the interest for fans is they know they'll be watching a series of 50-50 contests – what fans want to see is two fighters putting everything on the line.

"Boxing has been plagued for too long by cards having one decent bout and the rest hardly worth watching.

"Our purpose is to make this the biggest boxing competition in the country for excitement. We aim to appeal to regular boxing fans, of course, but we also want to draw in a new audience.

"There are plenty of people who are aware of the big fights like Groves and Froch, but if you asked them a question like who's the Southern Area champion they wouldn't know.

"Boxing has been really badly promoted and it has to be a huge fight to get good media coverage.

"People in professional boxing haven't moved with the times – they

a league apart









KENT BOYS: Top: Dartford's John Moloney, left. Middle: Chatham's Bill Harmer, right. Bottom: Jason Chay, from Margate, left. All are league boxers. KEA

need to look at the demographics and age groups. There's the internet and the explosion of social media – young people talk in a very different manner to people who are 50 or 60.

"Boxing has been stuck in the Dark Ages. They get a venue, stick up a few posters and think that's it. Promoters need to look at their model again."

And the Queensbury message is clearly spreading among fighter and fan alike.

There are "pushing 550 or 600" boxers in the league, while the fact that British Eurosport has chosen to televise bouts, together with the league's use of that all-important social media, means the phenomenon of Queensbury is spreading ever wider.

On Saturday we'll get a better idea of how much our Kent fighters will be in the vanguard of that drive.

■ **Doors for Kings Of The Palace, on Saturday, July 12, open at 5pm, with the first contest due to start at 6pm. Standard entry for all 18 bouts is priced at £35.**

Sport **Shorts**

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Conway signs up with the Dragons for Formula E test

SEVENOAKS racer Mike Conway has joined Los Angeles team Dragon Racing and will be driving in the inaugural all-electric FIA Formula E Championship.

He is a multi-race winner in the IndyCar Series and in 2014 is also driving with Toyota for its LMP1 WEC programme.

His previous experience includes three seasons in GP2 and a period as a Formula 1 test driver for Honda Racing F1 Team.

Conway said: "It is with great pleasure and excitement that I will be at the wheel of the Dragon Racing entry in the inaugural season of the FIA Formula E Championship.

"I have been very interested in Formula E since it was announced and I am proud to be involved with Dragon Racing in what I believe is breaking new ground in motorsports."



EXCITED: Mike Conway



BUSY BOSS: Manager Peter Taylor

Taylor signs two more for Gillingham

GILLINGHAM manager Peter Taylor has been busy boosting his squad yet further in preparation for the 2014-15 season.

Sunderland defender John Egan is joining the club on a two-year contract.

The Republic of Ireland Under-21 international is signing on a free transfer after being released by the Premiership club at the end of last season.

Also coming to Priestfield is former Brentford striker Luke Norris.

The 21-year-old forward made four first-team appearances for the west London outfit, scoring one goal.

Taylor has now signed eight players during the summer.

Invicta lose a stand but gain a new terrace

FOLKESTONE Invicta have a new terrace, thanks essentially to the storms of last winter.

Gales wrecked the beloved Wilf Armory Stand at the club's Fullicks Stadium.

And now with the stand – named after the club's late president – demolished, it becomes an extensive open terrace behind the two dugouts on the landward side of the playing area

In short, it changes the face of the old ground where Folkestone teams have played for so many years.

Most of the 336 seats from the old stand have been switched to the opposite stand, known affectionately as The Grandads' Stand but more formally now as The Brian Merryman Stand in honour of the club's long-serving director.

McAuley moves to Princes Park

DEFENDER Rory McAuley has joined Dartford from Cambridge United.

Darts manager Tony Burman told the club website: "I am delighted to welcome Rory back to the club after a successful loan spell.

"Once we received our reprieve it gave me a better chance of signing Rory for next season."

Kent thrashed to all but end T20 hopes

KENT were beaten with embarrassing ease by Surrey in Wednesday's T20 Blast match at The Kia Oval to make qualification from the South group highly unlikely.

Kent made 155-4, Darren Stevens top-scoring with 56 not out and Fabian Cowdrey hitting 55, but Surrey reached their target with eight wickets and more than two overs to spare.

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11/11 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr Estate DSG Corrida Red under 37,000 miles	£10,995
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11/60 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr, DSG Race Blue under 40,000 miles	£8,895
14/14 1.2 12V 69 Special Edition 5dr Brilliant Silver Delivery Mileage	£8,695
14/14 1.2 12V 69 Special Edition 5dr Denim Blue Delivery Mileage	£8,695
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10/10 1.6 TDI Elegance 5dr Estate Metal Grey under 48,000 miles	£7,795
12/61 1.2 TSI 86 SE 5dr Corrida Red under 27,000 miles	£7,650
10/10 1.4 TDI 80 Level 3 5dr Hatchback Rosso Brunello Metallic under 23,000 miles	£6,995
05/05 1.4 16V 100 Elegance 5dr Satin Grey under 53,000 miles	£3,995
ŠKODA Rapid	
13/63 Spaceback 1.2 TSI 105 SE 5dr Candy White under 3,000 miles	£14,995
13/63 Spaceback 1.2 TSI 105 SE 5dr Candy White under 1,000 miles	£13,995
ŠKODA Yeti	
11/61 2.0 TDI 110 SE Plus 5dr Corrida Red under 31,000 miles	£14,995
10/60 2.0 TDI 110 S 5dr Black Magic under 12,000 miles	£12,995
12/61 1.2 TSI 105 S 5dr Steel Grey under 18,000 miles	£11,995
ŠKODA Roomster	
13/13 1.6 TDI 90 SE 5dr Brilliant Silver under 3,000 miles	£10,695
ŠKODA Octavia	
13/13 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Cappuccino under 17,000 miles	£14,995
10/60 2.0 TDI 170 vRS 5dr Hatchback Candy White under 35,000 miles	£12,895
11/11 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Pacific Blue under 13,000 miles	£12,495
12/12 1.6 TDI 105 SE Plus 5dr Petrol Blue Metallic under 35,000 miles	£10,995
10/10 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Hatchback Meteor Grey under 37,000 miles	£10,695
10/60 1.2 TSI 105 S 5dr Auto Satin Grey under 9,000 miles	£8,895
ŠKODA Superb	
13/63 2.0 TDI 170 Outdoor Estate 4x4 5dr Black Magic under 4,000 miles	£22,995
11/61 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Steel Grey under 32,000 miles	£16,495
ŠKODA Estates	
13/63 Superb 2.0 TDI 170 Outdoor Estate 4x4 5dr Black Magic under 4,000 miles	£22,995
11/61 Superb 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Steel Grey under 32,000 miles	£16,495
13/13 Octavia 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Cappuccino under 17,000 miles	£14,995
14/14 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr Estate DSG Corrida Red under 37,000 miles	£10,995
14/14 Fabia 1.6 TDI 75 SE Estate 5dr Denim Blue Delivery Mileage	£10,995
12/62 Fabia 1.2 TSI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate DSG Black Magic Pearl under 32,000 miles	£9,995
11/11 Fabia 1.2 TSI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Corrida Red under 22,000 miles	£9,695
11/61 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr Estate DSG Sprint Yellow under 14,000 miles	£8,995
10/10 Fabia 1.6 TDI Elegance 5dr Estate Metal Grey under 48,000 miles	£7,795
DSG/Automatics	
11/61 Superb 2.0 TDI 170 160 Elegance 5dr Estate DSG Steel Grey under 32,000 miles	£16,495
13/13 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr DSG Candy White under 9,000 miles	£11,495
11/11 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr Estate DSG Corrida Red under 37,000 miles	£10,995
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13/13 Citigo 1.0 MPI 75 Elegance 5dr Auto Brilliant Silver under 4,000 miles	£9,495
11/61 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr Estate DSG Spirit Yellow under 14,000 miles	£8,995
11/60 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr DSG Race Blue under 40,000 miles	£8,895
10/60 Octavia 1.2 TSI 105 S 5dr DSG Auto Satin Grey under 9,000 miles	£8,895
Demonstrators	
13/63 Superb 2.0 TDI 170 Outdoor Estate 4x4 5dr Black Magic under 4,000 miles	£22,995
13/13 Octavia 1.6 TDI 105 Elegance 5dr Estate Cappuccino under 17,000 miles	£14,995
13/63 Spaceback 1.2 TSI 105 SE 5dr Candy White under 3,000 miles	£14,995
13/63 Spaceback 1.2 TSI 105 SE 5dr Candy White under 1,000 miles	£13,995
13/13 Fabia 1.4 TSI vRS 180 5dr, DSG Candy White under 9,000 miles	£11,495
13/63 Citigo 1.0 MPI 60 Sport 5dr Deep Black under 3,000 miles	£8,995
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